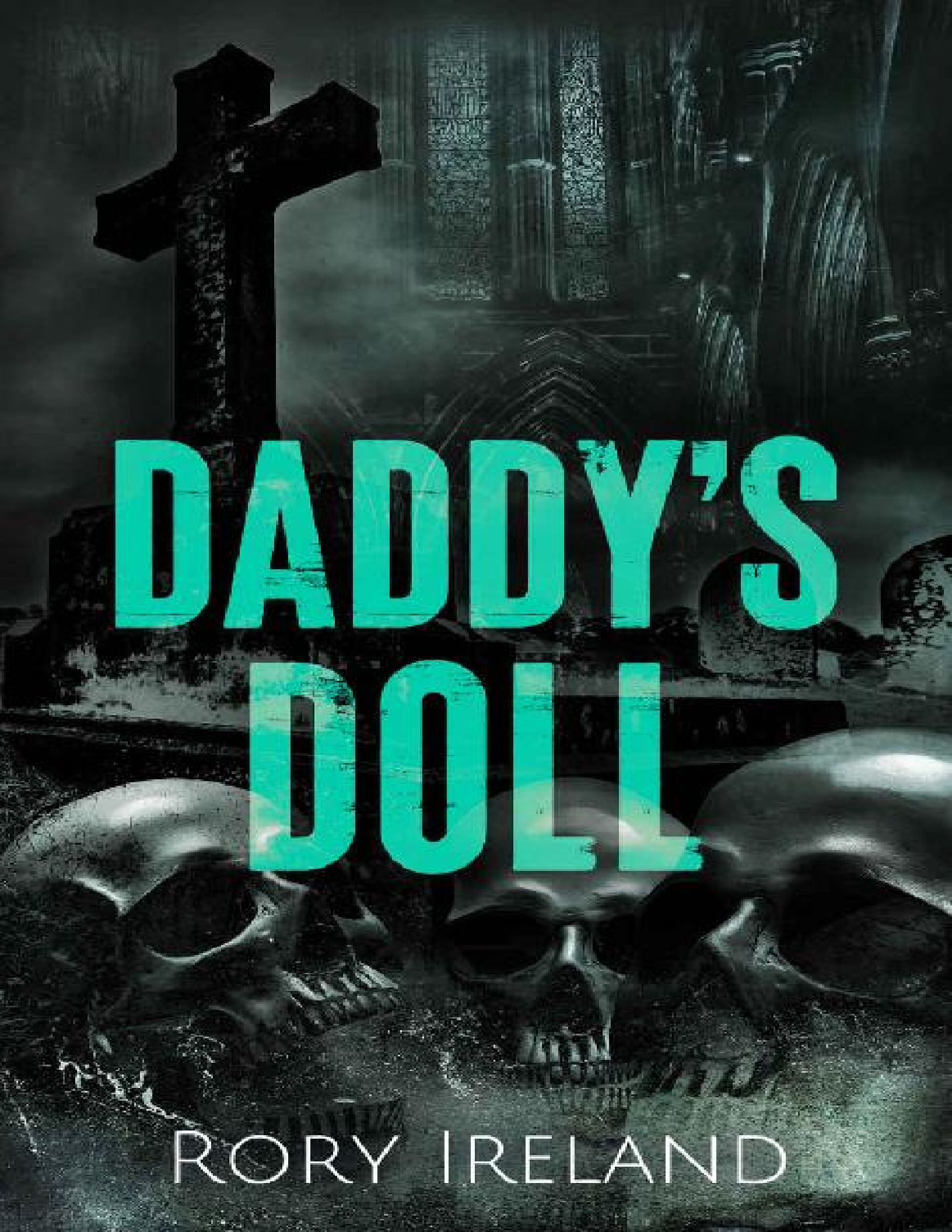
DADDY'S
DOLL
RORY IRELAND

DADDY’S DOLL

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to the girlies who want a jealous possessive daddy to chase them through the woods and fuck them in the graveyard…

this one is for you

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I guess darkness serves a purpose: to show us that there is redemption through chaos.

— BRENDEN FRASER

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CONTENT TROPES AND TAGS

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OLIVIA

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THREE MONTHS AGO

I slip out of my room and tiptoe down the staircase. I try not to wake anyone, especially Mom because she's been in a really weird mood all weekend. She called my siblings and me to come home from college and has been hiding in her room, refusing to speak to anyone nearly the entire time we've been here. The cool air of the moonlit night paired with my heart pounding with anticipation sends cold chills over my entire body. None of us knew why she wanted the impromptu family meeting except for the fact that two of our siblings were caught sleeping together. That was a couple weeks ago, though, so the timing is off. Ethan and Isabella have always been the two Hillcrest siblings who do whatever they want, and this situation isn't any different. Mom was angry when she found out, but Dad took the news a little better. He's like that though, always cool, no matter what is happening.

The property is quiet, completely shrouded in the stillness of the early morning hours. I make my way through our backyard, and the grass is cool and dewy beneath my bare feet. A tingling sensation begins stirring in my lower belly at the thought of where I'm heading. The last time I saw Dad, the tension between us was so thick that I promised myself the next time I saw him I'd confront him. I'd ask him what is happening, why he looks at me in a way his eyes would never dare rove over my two sisters. I pause when I reach the work shed nestled at the edge of the property because I know this could go two different ways, and I'm not sure I'm emotionally prepared for either one of them.

The shed is bathed in a soft, golden glow, the dim light filtering through the dusty windows that probably haven’t been cleaned in years. Inside, the scent of freshly cut wood fills the air, mingling with the earthy smell of the tree line surrounding our land. This is my dad’s sanctuary, where he crafts beautiful pieces of furniture that I’ve admired my entire life. Lately, he’s been pushing me away, and it’s been even worse since I’ve been away from home for my first year of college. When I come home, it’s like he’s angry at me and can’t take his eyes off of me all at the same time. I thought I was imagining it at first, but I think he’s picked up on the crush I have on him, or at the very least, the tension between us. He’s spent nearly the whole time my siblings and I have been home out here working and avoiding everyone. I know I’m the reason. I also know I should leave him alone. It’s wrong. Everything I feel for him is wrong. It should disgust me the way it does him, but it doesn’t. I should feel ashamed because this is so much different from what Ethan and Isabella have going on. I should be thinking about what something like this will do to our family and how what I want from my dad is such a betrayal to Mom. None of that matters to me right now. All I care about is seeing him, taking him in, remembering how being close to him makes me feel for the lonely nights I’m destined for when I head back to school.

I push the door further open so gently, but the hinges creak softly, and the sound is deafening in the silence. My breath catches when I see him, and even though I’m fully aware that it’s wrong, nothing could drag me away from him. I might only be eighteen, but I know what I want. He's arched over his current fixation, just as I knew he would be. His strong silhouette illuminated by the fragile glow of the single light bulb hanging from the ceiling. My dad is shirtless, his bare chest glistening with sweat, his muscles flexing as he works diligently on a wooden rocking chair.

My dad is ruggedly handsome, with cropped black hair and a near-constant five-o’clock shadow that only makes his green eyes seem more vibrant. He glances up as I enter, and there's a flicker of surprise in his eyes, quickly masked with the same blank look he’s been giving me for the last few months. "What are you doing up at this hour?" he asks, his voice a low, gravelly rumble.

I move closer to him, the wooden floor cool against my feet. I'm dressed in a thin tank top and short shorts, and the cool night breeze sends a shiver down my spine. I don't answer his question but instead reach out to touch

his arm lightly, my fingers tracing the contours of strained, corded muscles. I can’t focus on anything else other than getting closer to him.

Dad inhales sharply at my touch, his moss green eyes darkening with desire so apparent that even if he flat out said he didn’t want me at this moment, I wouldn’t believe him. This tension has been between us for months, and sometimes the way he looks at me, I can tell he wants things from me that no one else would ever understand. I don’t recall ever seeing him look at another woman the way he looks at me, not even Mom.

Especially not Mom.

I step closer, my hand now resting on his chest, feeling the rapid thud of his heart beneath my palm. "I couldn't sleep," I confess, my voice sounding sweet even to my own ears. I notice that he pulls the soft, compliant side out of me. "I saw the light on, and I was curious what you were working on," I say, but my words sound like nothing but humming to my own ears now. I’m zeroed in on him and the way he’s reacting to me. I can see the thick muscles of his abdomen tighten, and I wonder if it’s for my benefit. Does he notice the way my body reacts to him?

His gaze drops to the chair, and he smiles ruefully, and I want to know what’s going through his mind right now. "It's almost done," he says, his voice husky. "I've been putting my heart into it, thinking about how it would look on the porch of the cabin." Dad has been building a cabin out in the wilderness and away from civilization. Mom will never let our family move there full-time when it’s finished, but it’s something he’s wanted for so long. She won’t allow any of us kids to go with him when he’s working on it, but I’m hoping to see it someday. The way his eyes light up when he talks about it makes me feel sullen that I’ll never get to see it.

My thoughts of the cabin are shaken out of my mind when Dad abruptly moves closer to me, his feet only shifting slightly, but it’s enough to make my breath catch in my throat. His eyes flick from mine down to my lips for a brief moment before he looks away, turning his body back toward the rocking chair. He keeps doing this to me, making me think he wants me and then ripping that notion away before his lips meet mine. I’m not going to let it go this time. I need an answer one way or another. I move my hand to his back, my fingers tracing the lines of his muscles there in the same way I did his chest. "And who do you imagine rocking in it?" I ask, my voice a shaking whisper. I’m usually shy with him, too nervous to meet his eyes,

but he’s not pushing me away or telling me to go back to bed, and that spurs me on.

He looks back at me, his eyes filled with a hunger that matches my own. "You," he says simply, his voice rough. I’ve never had a boyfriend before, but I know what desire sounds like in his voice. He wants me right now. He takes a deep breath and his teeth bite into his bottom lip before he finally admits, "Us. I imagine us in this chair."

I take a step closer, my breasts pressing against the hot skin of his back, and only my thin tank top separates us, the tension between us palpable. "Show me," I breathe, my lips brushing against his ear.

He doesn't need any further encouragement. He turns to me, his hands finding my waist as he pulls me against him with such force that he steals my breath for a second time tonight. Our mouths meet in a searing kiss, a culmination of months of denial and restraint on both of our parts. His lips are warm and demanding, his tongue seeking entrance to my mouth as he kisses me like a man who has been deprived of something he needs for far too long.

I moan softly, my hands moving to tangle in his dark hair pulling him closer to my trembling body. Our kiss is fierce and passionate, almost like a wildfire that is consuming us both from the inside out. He lifts me effortlessly, and I wrap my legs around his hips. I feel the hardness of his body pressing against the softness of mine. His hard cock is straining against his jeans, and even through my cotton shorts, I can feel the intense heat of his body.

He lifts me up on the rough flat top of his workbench, the wood cool against my bare skin as he gently lays me down on it. Our kisses are desperate and hungry, a tangle of lips and tongues, and I arch my back, pressing my body up against his. I want to remember how every inch of him feels over top of me because even in this moment, I know that it could be ripped away from me at any second. I want to remember this night for the rest of my life.

He breaks the kiss, his eyes dark with desire as he looks down at me. "Tell me to stop," Dad rasps and his voice is so husky with need that if my panties weren’t already soaked from his kisses and the way he’s holding me, they would be now.

I jerk my head because it’s the only thing I can muster with my own desire burning fiercely. "Don’t stop," I finally whisper when he doesn’t

move. I don’t want him to change his mind. I don’t want to go back to that cold, unforgiving dorm room in that fucking castle they pretend is a school and think about what this night would have been like if I’d just been brave enough to tell him what I need.

And with that, the tension that has been building between us for so long finally snaps. Our bodies entwine in a frenzy of passion, the wooden floor beneath his feet creaking with our movements. He pulls my tank top down over my breasts, pulling his mouth away from mine and then dipping his lips to one of my nipples. The world around us fades into a hazy blur as Dad’s lips claim mine in a passionate kiss again, the dark stubble on his cheeks and chin deliciously scraping against the sensitive skin of my face. The intensity of our desire seems to electrify the air, pulling us deeper into something so forbidden. I can’t fathom the fallout of this moment when the rest of our family finds out.

But then, a scream shatters the moment like fragile glass breaking around us. We pull apart, breathless and wide-eyed, our bodies still pressed close together. The sound echoes in the shed, freezing us in place.

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2

OLIVIA

Dad’s grip on my waist tightens, possessiveness flaring in his eyes as he instinctively pulls me back into him, shielding me from whatever unknown threat lurks beyond his shed's walls. In this moment, his protectiveness feels more intimate than the way he kissed me or touched me tonight.

Silence follows the scream, and it's so thick that it feels like it’s going to suffocate me. The world outside seems to hold its breath as if waiting for something to happen. But we hear nothing, only the eerie stillness of the forbidden moment we should never have had.

It’s harsh when the distant wail of sirens cuts through the quiet, the sound growing louder with each passing second. Flashing red and blue lights pierce the darkness, casting erratic shadows across the walls of the shed where we’re still glued to each other.

I feel a shiver of unease, my heart pounding with anxiety, and I’m almost ashamed to admit it has little to do with the thought of someone being hurt or in trouble but rather that our moment is over. I can sense it before it happens, and I hate that invisible connection we have right now. Dad releases his grip on me, his attention now focused on the commotion outside. The possessiveness that burned in his eyes just moments ago is gone, replaced by a cool detachment that I know all too well.

Without a word, he turns and heads toward the shed's entrance. I start to follow him, but he turns back to me, his eyes flashing to my uncovered chest. His gaze is searing when it reaches my face in a silent demand to cover up. I feel my cheeks heat with embarrassment, and only when I've

fixed my top does he head back out the door with me shadowing his every move. I can’t even wonder what the reason for the lights and sirens could possibly be because I’m suffering from the whiplash from Dad’s hot and cold attitude. He doesn't hold my hand, doesn't keep me close. It's as if what just happened between us meant nothing to him, as if I mean nothing to him.

When we step outside, all I see is nothing but chaos and confusion. Police cars line the front lawn, their flashing lights bathing the property. Officers move about, their expressions tense and grim.

My breath catches in my throat as I take in the sight. What could have happened to summon the police in the dead of night? I want to ask them, to demand answers, but the look in Dad’s eyes warns me against it. He’s in charge right now, and I’d probably feel better about letting him take the lead and following him blindly if he wasn’t being so cold to me. The air is thick with tension, and I feel more alone than ever. Dad stands beside me, but he might as well be a world away. His gaze is distant, his attention on our house. Dad’s frustration boils over as he approaches one of the officers. "What's going on here?" he demands.

The officer's face is stern, and he blocks our path. "I'm sorry, sir, but you can't go any closer to the house. We haven’t gotten everyone out of the house yet."

A sense of dread settles over me as I try to peer past the officers to the front porch of the house. There, in the dim light, I see my mother, wild-eyed and disheveled, as she exits the front door. Her eyes scan the yard, and it’s eerie how easily she finds me, picking me out of the crowd and begins screaming at me, "You would have been next!"

The officers react swiftly, drawing their weapons and shouting at her to get down and to drop the bloody butcher knife she’s holding in her hand. But before they can act, my twin sister, Isabella, rushes out from behind our mother and tackles her to the ground.

Two officers grab hold of both Dad and me, forcibly ushering us away from the house and toward an ambulance that's parked nearby. I hear Mom scream, and then there’s nothing. Dad is in a furious struggle with them, demanding to know what happened to his family, but they won't let us go back.

Tears stream down my face as I scream, "I need to check on my sisters! I need to make sure they're okay!" But my pleas fall on deaf ears as the

police continue to keep us at bay. The world outside has descended into chaos. Flashing ambulance lights compete with the fiery glow while the wailing of sirens echoes in my ears. Ambulances, fire trucks, and a swarm of uniformed officers have taken over our quiet front yard.

I stand frozen, heart pounding, as if I'm trapped in a real-life nightmare. My eyes dart around frantically, trying to make sense of anything that is happening around me. Fear surges through my veins, and I can't breathe. This can't be happening. I knew Mom was in a bad mood, but if she attacked my siblings like I think she did, no one could have seen this coming. She’s always been quiet, strict, but never psychotic.

I spot Landon as he’s emerging from the house, cradling his twin sister, Sophia, in his arms. His face is contorted with fear and anguish, his expression etched with desperation. He's holding her like she's the most precious thing he's ever seen in his life, as if he wants to shield her from all the dangers in the world. She’s older than me by two years, but she seems so small and delicate, lying in his arms, unmoving.

He rushes down the porch, his pace unfaltering despite the police officers yelling at him to stop. I can hear him screaming, pleading with them, his voice cracking with raw emotion. He's telling them that she needs help, that they'll have to hurt him to get him to stop. I've never seen him so intense, so determined, and it's both terrifying and heart-wrenching.

The officers seem to recognize the urgency in his voice, allowing him to pass. Landon carries Sophia toward an awaiting ambulance, where paramedics in blue uniforms scramble to assist her. My heart feels like it's about to burst from my chest as I watch from a distance, unable to get any closer to see what's happening.

Landon's voice rings out, loud and desperate. He's yelling at the EMS personnel, insisting that they have to work on her in his arms because he promised her he wouldn't let her go. His devotion to her is palpable, something I suspected but have never seen with my own eyes. He’s always been protective of her, but right now, he’s absolutely feral.

I want to move, to run to them, to make sure everything is okay, but I'm paralyzed by the surreal scene unfolding before me. It's all too overwhelming. Tears blur my vision, and I can only stand there, helplessly wondering if any of my other siblings are going to come out of the house with a growing sense of dread. Finally, two gurneys are brought out—one carrying my older brother, Ethan, who is alive, but I hear someone say he’s

in critical condition, and the other holding his twin brother, Samuel, who is covered by a white sheet. I know it’s Samuel because he’s the only other man in the house besides Landon. My heart shatters as I realize that Samuel didn't make it. The world around me blurs into a nightmarish haze as the truth sinks in. I look to my dad for comfort that he can’t afford to give me, and he does nothing but stare through me like he wasn’t just crushing me to him like I was the only thing he’s ever wanted in this world.

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GRANT

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PRESENT

The ax swings through the crisp morning air, chopping a log of firewood in two with a satisfying thud. Beads of sweat trickle down my bare chest, glistening in the early morning sun. The rhythm of chopping wood has become a welcome distraction, a way to drown out the relentless echo of my thoughts. Thoughts that always lead me back to her. My perfect little doll.

I know what I'm doing is wrong. Forbidden. But the mind has a way of straying into this dangerous territory with her, despite all reason and logic. I was holding it together, keeping my distance, ignoring Olivia so I wouldn't snap and do something that I'd regret and probably ruin her life. It was supposed to be different with me. I only have one brother. The dreaded Hillcrest curse wasn't supposed to touch me or my family. I never thought that when I agreed to the arranged marriage my parents concocted, that decades later, I'd find myself nothing short of obsessed with my youngest daughter. I also couldn't have guessed that my wife would betray me in ways I still haven't fully grasped three months after the fact. We went on to have three sets of twins, and I haven't touched her since Olivia and Isabella were born eighteen years ago. There was never love, or attraction, if I'm honest, between us. I thought having a family with her might change my mind, but it was clear after her third pregnancy that it still wasn't enough.

If I'm honest, and I do try to be, I've never felt anything for any woman until Olivia's first visit home from college. It was like being smacked in the face with how beautiful she is. I've always known she was pretty, smart, and kind, but I suppose being away from her for several weeks made it feel

like I was seeing her for the very first time all over again. I knew right then and there that the curse was still thriving and alive in my veins. Even though I never got an explanation for my wife's snap decision to harm my entire family, I fully believe she knew what I was feeling for Olivia. How could she not? I can't take my eyes off the girl when we're in the same room. I ache to hold her and touch her in ways I'd kill another man for if he tried. My wife was successful in taking the life of one of my oldest sons, Samuel, and injuring his twin, Ethan, to the point he had to be hospitalized for several weeks after the stabbing. My daughter Sophia was stabbed trying to protect her twin, Landon, but she was released from the hospital the next morning. Despite the fact that I'll never have answers to what my wife's objectives were that night, I can't help but think she was only targeting my sons because she thought they were sick with the curse.

They are, well we all are, I suppose. Ethan and Isabella live here in the cabin with me, and I don't interfere with what they want to do. They want to be together, and I'm not going to get in their way. I know Ethan would kill anyone who did. Curse or not, he's obsessed with her in a way that I now understand because I have to fight it every day trying to stay away from Olivia. It has driven me to this solitary life in the wilderness, in this cabin I always wanted to live in, but now that dream feels hollow without her here with me.

With each swing of the ax, my obsession with Olivia burns me from the inside out. She's etched into my mind, a constant presence that I know will never leave me. Her laughter, the way she looks at me with those deep, knowing eyes, her gentle touch—it all torments me. She is a forbidden temptation, the one I can never allow myself to have. It's different with us than Ethan and Isabella. He's her brother, not her father. I'm meant to take care of Olivia and protect her, not lust after her like some creep.

I pause in my wood-chopping to wipe the sweat from my brow, my chest heaving with exertion. The thought of what I can't have with Olivia intensifies as I look toward the cabin where Ethan and Isabella are eating the breakfast she made for us. They stand on the cabin's porch, framed by rough wooden beams. Isabella's laughter is like the tinkling of wind chimes as she playfully tosses a piece of bacon to Ethan. Their dynamic is perfect, and while I've seen him handle her roughly before, I know he will do anything in his power to protect her. Seeing him playfully pull her on his lap and kiss the top of her head makes my heart burn for Olivia.

My mind drifts to Hillcrest University, where Olivia is studying. The idea of going there to find her has been growing like a seed in my thoughts. I long to see her, to hold her, to beg her to forgive me for being so harsh with her when all she wanted was my comfort. I couldn’t be what she needed. I couldn’t even be a father because all I wanted to do was cling to her, claim her, disappear from everything.

I pick up another log and swing the ax down with all the rage I have inside of me, the blade biting into the wood. The sound of the impact echoes through the forest, a release for the frustration that simmers inside of me.

As I chop wood, Ethan saunters over, a devilish grin on his face. I already know he’s about to say some dumb shit that’s going to set me off. He’s been testing my patience, taunting me ever since he used both of his brain cells to figure out how I feel about Olivia. “Want to hear a fun fact?” he begins.

“No,” I say immediately because anything that is fun for Ethan is never fun for anyone else. He’s a sadistic little shit and always has been. I glance over at Isabella who is grinning at me, and I don’t doubt that she’s in on whatever this joke is.

“The ratio of boys to girls at Hillcrest is three to one,” he tells me, his deep voice going up an octave in his glee.

I glance at him, my grumpy demeanor not masking my curiosity. "Why are you telling me this?"

Ethan shrugs, raising an eyebrow teasingly. "Oh, I don't know. I’m sure it’s fine. Olivia has three—"

“Don’t fucking finish that sentence,” I growl, reaching out to grab him by the shirt collar like I did when he was younger, but he expects it, dodging me.

When he sobers from laughing, he says, “You’re miserable without her.”

I sigh, not willing to admit that I’m considering going to Hillcrest unless I can talk myself out of it again. "I have to run into town later. Just make sure you look after Isabella while I'm gone." I know I don’t need to tell him that, but the fatherly side of me can’t help it. We have a beautiful home, but the wilderness is not a safe place.

Ethan chuckles, his mischief evident. "Oh, you know I will." I roll my eyes at his innuendo before he takes off running toward the cabin. I don’t

need to look in that direction to know that he’s scooping Isabella up because I hear her giggling, telling him halfheartedly to put her down.

Beads of sweat continue to trickle down my bare chest, but they offer no relief from the burning desire that courses through my veins. The once-soothing rhythm of chopping wood has transformed into a maddening reminder of what I can't have. As I finish chopping wood for the day, a decision crystallizes in my mind. Each swing of the ax, each thud as it bites into the stubborn wood, only serves to fuel the fire within me. I can't escape the relentless ache, the yearning for Olivia that gnaws at my soul. I know what I have to do. I need to see Olivia, to tell her how I feel, to ask her to be with me. It is a reckless, desperate plan, but I can't ignore the pull any longer.

Thoughts of Olivia invade my mind, uninvited and unwelcome. I picture her with vivid clarity—the way her eyes light up when she laughs, the delicate curve of her lips, the softness of her touch. She's a forbidden fruit, tantalizingly out of reach, and it's driving me into an absolute rage.

With a growl of frustration, I throw the ax down onto the pile of wood. It clatters to the ground, echoing exactly how I feel. I can't continue like this. I won’t survive it. But will she survive what I’ll do if she doesn’t agree to come with me?

Determined to find some semblance of calm, I storm into the cabin. The oppressive weight of what I need from her clings in the air around me and it’s suffocating. I know there's only one way to momentarily escape what she does to me.

The water pelts my skin, stinging like a thousand tiny needles, but I welcome the pain as I step into the cold shower. The relief is fleeting. With each drop that courses over my body, I imagine Olivia's touch, her fingers tracing patterns on my skin, igniting a fire that only she can put out.

My mind wanders to that one stolen moment, a memory I can't erase. The taste of her lips, the softness of her body pressed against mine. It's a dangerous thought, one that threatens to consume me entirely. Olivia completes me in ways I never thought possible, like a missing piece of a puzzle.

Fuck this shit. I shut off the water and step out of the shower, the cold air hitting my damp skin like a shock. I dry myself off quickly and pull on a pair of jeans, a dark shirt, and sturdy boots. I can't stay here any longer,

wallowing in a disaster I created. I need to finish what I started, and I can only hope she'll forgive me when I do.

I walk toward my shed, my heart pounding with anticipation. Opening the door, I reach for a coil of sturdy rope I have hanging on the wall. I might not need it, but I'm not willing to take that chance. I'm not coming back to this cabin until I have my doll at my side. I throw it into the bed of the truck, the thud of it landing a promise to myself that I intend to keep.

Chapter Four- Olivia

The brisk wind sweeps across the ancient campus, sending leaves scattering in a whirlwind around me and cascading against the stone buildings before falling onto the cobblestone walkways. Hillcrest looks like it's straight out of a postcard, but not everything is as it seems. A shiver goes up my spine, a tingling sensation like something is about to happen. Something exciting or downright terrible. I can't decide which. My brother, Landon, is walking in front of me and protectively wraps his arm tightly around his twin Sophia, as if to shield her from the gusts. It's a public display of affection that I can't help but notice, and I sneak a glance around to see if anyone else is watching. He's always been overbearing, menacing even, when it comes to her, but since she was injured, he's become so fixated on her it's bordering on obsession. I don't care what they do. I have enough problems of my own, but I don't need them drawing this kind of attention to our family in broad daylight in the middle of campus. At least Isabella is with Ethan at Dad's cabin now because she was starting to lose her mind and frazzle the last nerve I have without him. The thought of Dad and the cabin he's been hiding away from me in brings back the tingle. I suppose exciting is off the table and whatever is swirling in the air is going to be bad because that man has not brought anything but sadness and anger since he dropped me off here, refused to talk to me about what happened between us, and then turned his back on me.

As we make our way across campus, Landon and Sophia walk a step ahead of me, and I can tell they're having a serious conversation by the way he continuously looks down at her. Landon would be happy if they were always alone, but now it makes sense why she allowed him to pull her away from me when we began walking. I can only see his side profile, but his brow is furrowed, and his full lips are pulled into a tight line. They're the only set of Hillcrest twins who don't look alike. His tall, athletic frame and

her petite, curvy one look like they'd match in a different way than sharing a birthday.

I'm relieved when Leila, our cousin, joins us, or me, rather. She's a bundle of energy, her brown hair pulled back into a high ponytail that seems to bounce with every step. She's a cheerleader with Sophia for the university's hockey team, which is a position of great pride because Hillcrest is all about ice hockey. It overshadows the football and basketball teams tenfold. It's nothing new to me, not with Dad coaching for as long as I can remember and all of my brothers having their pictures plastered around campus as MVP at one time or another.

"He's too much," Leila greets me with a cheerful grin, her rosy cheeks and bright eyes conveying her mood. She gives my arm a playful punch, and I can't help but smile in response when she nods her head toward Landon. "Hillcrest curse is alive and well," she says flippantly, but I can hear the annoyance in her voice. Leila has two brothers, and they're not at all like Landon or even Ethan, who is a certified psycho. They're so heinous I don't even want to admit they're related to me.

"About to snap any second, I think," I reply, my voice carrying a hint of amusement because I can't see a world where Landon would actually hurt Sophia. Even if he has been rough and agitated lately, he seems to care for her more than anything else in this world. Which is more than I can say for Dad. "I guess the curse doesn't work for everyone the same way."

Leila nods, rolling her eyes. "You can say that again. Isabella and Sophia get their perfect matches literally obsessed with them, and I get two disturbed brothers that can't stand me." I know she's using humor to cope. She never talks about the things they do to her, but I can only imagine from the things I've seen.

"He literally can't take his eyes off of her," Leila says as we walk, and my eyes are drawn back to Landon and Sophia again. They seem to be in their own little world, whispering to each other, and I can't help but notice when she shifts away from him to look up at him while she speaks that he instantly frowns, jerking her back into his side. There's a part of me, as obnoxious as it is, that feels a twinge of jealousy because I want that same thing with Dad. I want to feel like I'm the only one who matters to him. I want to practically be stitched to his side because he can't fathom the thought of being separated from me. I shove those thoughts down because that won't happen, and I know that. It's already ruined. The devastation he

caused by abandoning me cannot be repaired, and I wouldn’t trust him again even if he showed up here professing his love. Which he won’t because he’s not that kind of man.

I glance at Leila, who's prattling on about the next hockey game. I’m happy that she’s excited, but I won’t be going. It reminds me too much of Dad, and I already have to force myself to push those feelings down long enough to be able to get my skate time in. It’s a lose-lose situation because figure skating is the only thing that gets me out of a funk and calms me down, but the only place I have to skate is the icehouse—Dad’s domain for so many years.

As we reach the heart of campus, I notice the quad stretching out before us, students scattered across the grass, enjoying the fleeting warmth of the sun. The old stone buildings, with their ivy-covered walls, should be a comfort to me, but nothing is anymore.

I turn my attention back to Landon and Sophia. They’ve come to a stop, and I know it’s because her next class is in the building to the left. He pulls her into him, her face pressed against his chest and his neck to press a kiss to the top of her head. The jealousy I felt earlier intensifies, but I quickly push it down. I’ll never have that with Dad, and I don’t want it with anyone else.

Leila nudges me playfully, snapping me out of my reverie. "You okay? I know you must still be going through it with everything that happened. Aunt Clara was wild for that," Leila says, and I can’t help but snicker at her choice of words. Only Leila would call someone ‘wild’ for trying to kill their entire family. She doesn’t know what happened between me and Dad, or if she does, she hasn’t let on to me.

I offer her a fake smile. "I might run away and join the circus, but yeah, I’m fine."

She gives me a smirk. "Bitch, you better take me with you if you do. I’m flexible. I can do cartwheels and shit." This does make me laugh because she’s been doing gymnastics since she was little and can do way more complicated things than a simple cartwheel. I take a deep breath, inhaling the crisp fall air. I could rush off to my own class and be early, but then I’ll be alone again. Because of who my family is, it’s not like I can make real friends at this school.

Landon's grumpy announcement cuts through whatever circus jokes Leila is prattling off to make us both feel better about the hands we’ve been

dealt.

"We're leaving," he states curtly, his tone leaving no room for argument.

Leila quickly interjects with a warm smile, “Sophia, don’t you have class?”

Landon answers for her. "No, she's coming with me. I need to get ready for the hockey game later."

Sophia offers an apologetic look. "I'll catch up with you guys at the game, okay? Have fun!"

Leila nods enthusiastically, her spunky spirit undeterred by the sudden change of plans. "Absolutely! You know I’ll be there." She laughs, holding her hands up and shaking them to imitate the pom-poms the cheerleaders use for some of their routines.

“So well-mannered,” Leila says to Landon, rolling her eyes, and he makes a half-assed attempt to lift his arm from around Sophia to flip his middle finger at Leila.

As Landon and Sophia walk away, I can't help but make excuses for his behavior. “He's been different since Mom did what she did.” Leila grimaces at the memory when I offer. “I can see the underlying panic whenever Sophia isn't with him. Her phone died the other day, and her charger wasn’t working. He about kicked my door in looking for her, and she was only over at the bookstore buying a new one. Mrs. Newberry was talking her ear off, and he nearly lost his mind. It's as if he's afraid to let her out of his sight, and I understand why.” Leila nods, looking back at them as they disappear across campus toward Landon’s dorm.

My phone starts ringing, the persistent vibrations a subtle annoyance. I send each call to voicemail without checking who the caller is. Leila notices and raises an eyebrow.

"Why aren't you answering your phone?" she asks.

I sigh, feeling a little embarrassed for what I’m about to tell her. "It's probably just Frank."

Chapter Five- Olivia

"Frank?" Leila repeats, her curiosity piqued.

I roll my eyes, recalling the unsettling encounters I've had with Frank from my biology class. "Yeah, Frank. He's... obsessed, not in a fun way. He creeps me out." The phone vibrates again, and I pinch the bridge of my nose, trying to will away the headache that’s coming on. “You know how it is here. No one genuine will come near us, and only the weirdos are brave

enough to approach us because they don’t have enough sense to realize what the men in our family will do to them.”

Leila's expression changes from curiosity to concern. "What do you mean? Is he bothering you?"

I hesitate for a moment, then decide to confide in her. "I skipped biology today, and now I think he's trying to figure out where I am. He called me three times five minutes after class started."

Just as I say that, Frank appears, greeting us with an overly eager smile. My stomach churns at the sight of him, and I can't shake the feeling of being watched. Not by him, but by someone else. I glance around, rudely ignoring Frank because the feeling is only getting stronger, and the tingling sensation is spreading up my back and up the base of my neck.

"Hey, Olivia," he finally says, forcing me to look at him. His voice oozing with a strange mixture of friendliness and intensity. “I missed you in class today. Are you sick?” There’s something accusatory in his tone that sets me on edge.

"Frank," I reply with a forced smile, my unease growing by the second.

Leila interjects, clearly seeing my discomfort. "She’s better now. We were just heading to our classes."

Frank's eyes dart between us; his stare is intense, and my stomach rolls. If this were my dad, I’d love this sort of attention, but coming from anyone else, it makes me bristle. "I was worried about you."

Before I can respond, Leila quickly flashes the time on her phone. "We really should get going or we’re going to be late."

I silently thank Leila for stepping in, but Frank's lingering presence still makes my skin crawl. I can't help but wonder how he found us on campus, and a growing sense of unease settles in the pit of my stomach.

“I took notes for you. Maybe we can meet up later for dinner so I can give them to you?”

I’d rather eat my backpack.

"I have plans tonight, but I’ll definitely see you in class," I reply, keeping my tone neutral. My focus shifts to Leila, who looks at me with a hint of panic in her eyes that I don’t understand.

"Olivia, can I talk to you for a sec?" Leila asks, trying to sound casual, but I see the way she’s trying to measure her breathing.

I raise an eyebrow but nod in agreement. "Sure, Frank, we'll catch up later," I tell him, but he only presses his lips together in a thin line like he’s

disappointed. He doesn’t move to leave, so Leila leads me a few steps away from Frank, and her voice lowers to a hushed tone. "I'm really sorry, Olivia, but I can't deal with this right now. Hudson and Hayden are headed this way."

I groan inwardly at the mention of her twin brothers. Hudson and Hayden have a reputation for being bullies, especially when it comes to their younger sister. "It's okay, Leila. Take care of yourself. We'll chat later."

Leila shoots me an appreciative look and quickly shifts her backpack over her shoulder, and when she does, her collar shifts, exposing a bruise on her neck. It looks a lot like a hickey, which doesn’t make sense to me because Hayden and Hudson make it known how much they despise her, but I know they’d never let her be alone with a guy long enough to mark her that way. She turns and starts heading toward the building her next class is in. My instincts kick in, and I can't just let her walk away without addressing it because if she did hook up with someone, the guy is going to end up dead or missing, and who knows what they’ll do to her when they find out. The Hillcrests do not need another scandal for people to murmur about when we walk by. I reach out and grab her wrist gently, pulling her back toward me. "Leila, wait."

Her eyes widen with a mixture of fear and desperation. "Olivia, please, not now."

But it's too late. Hudson and Hayden draw closer. They don't spare me or Frank a second glance. Their eyes are locked on their sister, their steps purposeful, and their presence foreboding.

I let go of Leila's wrist, sensing that my interference might make things worse. She darts away, and I watch her retreating form, worry gnawing at my insides. It's clear she's scared and doesn't want any more trouble today. I hate seeing her bubbly, funny personality squashed by tweedle dee and tweedle dum, but there’s nothing I can do about it.

Hudson and Hayden approach Leila, their shoulders bunched with tension. They exchange words with her, their voices low and menacing. I can't hear their conversation, but Leila's body language tells me it's far from pleasant.

“What did she do to them?” Frank pipes up, and I’m reminded that he’s still there. I roll my eyes at him, my mask slipping for just a moment before I pull it together.

“Just because a man is angry doesn’t mean the woman did something wrong,” I say, looking at him pointedly. Dad might not be around to fight for me, but I have two older brothers who are obligated to beat the shit out of Frank if I ask them to. But there’s no nice way to say that, so I don’t say anything at all and turn my attention back to Leila. My phone begins ringing again, and I absently click it off, trying to shake off the nervous feeling that envelops me again.

Hayden and Hudson, both significantly larger than Leila, engage in a heated argument with her, making her appear even smaller in comparison. My instincts scream at me to step in, to defend Leila, but that’s not how it works in this family. Neither one of them has claimed her like Ethan did Isabella, but she’s still theirs to do with as they wish. My brothers would never intervene, just like Hayden and Hudson would never interfere with what my brothers do.

Hayden and Hudson seem to take cruel pleasure in teasing and smirking at Leila's discomfort. It pains me to see Leila pushed around, and I'm about to speak out when Frank grabs the sleeve of my jacket, gently pulling me back toward him, preventing me from making the situation worse. Dad isn’t here to protect me, and my psychotic cousins know that.

Frank, always striving to be the protector, touches me with good intentions, but it doesn't sit right. His touch sends shivers down my spine that feel like needles, and it's a stark contrast to how I felt with my dad. Just the memory of the way he touched me that night in his shed ignites a longing in me, making me yearn for more, while Frank's hands on me make me feel uneasy.

I try to pull away from Frank's grasp, and this time, he lets me go. He speaks in a low voice, warning me that getting involved in this situation might lead to Hayden and Hudson targeting me. Fear grips me for a moment, but then something inside me snaps. I break free from his hold, and I glance back at Leila, still caught in the middle of Hayden and Hudson who now fortunately seem to be arguing with one another instead of with her. Hayden's voice rises in frustration, punctuated by angry gestures. Hudson's expression remains stern, his words measured and calm.

My phone begins ringing again, but I don’t have the wherewithal to realize that it can’t be Frank calling me incessantly because he’s standing right in front of me. Without warning, Hayden abruptly scoops Leila off her feet and throws her over his shoulder. My eyes widen as I watch her

helpless form, a pawn in their power struggle. Hudson, looking displeased, falls into step with them.

They march across the manicured lawn, the spectacle drawing the gaze of curious students who would never have enough nerve to say something to either of them. Just before they disappear from view, I notice Hudson's hand reaching out to grasp Leila's wrist as she hangs over her brother's shoulder. His fingers slide down to intertwine with hers in a way that seems so unlike the bully I know him to be.

It's only when they're out of my line of vision that Frank's voice pulls me out of my thoughts. "Aren't you going to answer your phone?"

My phone.

I flip it over in my hand and my jaw nearly drops when I see the words "Parental Unit" flashing on my screen. I changed it from Dad with a green heart—his favorite color, a few weeks ago when I finally gave up on calling him and leaving him messages.

I glance around looking for him because now I know what that tingling feeling was. It's definitely not going to be exciting. This is going to be terrible in more ways than I can count.

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4

GRANT

As I finally make my way off the dirt road that leads back to my new home and pull onto a winding, narrow road that leads to civilization, the first thing I notice is the incessant pinging of my phone. It's been silent for months. I was in such a bad headspace when I left, trying to shove every emotion I had for Olivia down deep inside my chest where it could never hurt her. She was so upset with me when I left her at Hillcrest that I didn’t think she would try to contact me at all. Let alone hundreds of times. Now, as I reach the outskirts of a small town, it's as if my phone has come to life, each ping a reminder of the girl I left behind.

I pull over onto the shoulder and grab my phone from the bench seat. The screen is lit up with notifications, missed calls, and countless unread messages. The majority of them are from Olivia. Guilt and anger churn within me as I realize just how long I've ignored her attempts to reach out. It's been months since I last heard her voice, and I can only imagine the anger and hurt she must be feeling. The thought of her feeling abandoned by me twists a knife in my chest. I thought I was doing the right thing. I thought I was influencing her interest in me because I couldn’t control myself around her. She would have been killed because of it if she hadn’t been in the shed with me that night. I truly believe that. I bang my fist on the dash, letting out only a fraction of the rage that consumes me. I chose wrong. I thought I was protecting Olivia, but I was hurting her instead.

I start with the voicemails, each one playing like a dagger to my hollow heart. My doll’s voice, once filled with warmth and affection, now carries a tone of resentment and anger. She tells me she doesn't need me anymore,

that she wouldn't call me even if she were in trouble. In her last voicemail, there’s no trace of sadness, but instead, realization that she knows I’m not coming back for her. She tells me not to worry about her earlier messages because there are plenty of men who will gladly step up and take my place. The one I didn’t want with her. The words hit me like a fist to the face, and I'm torn between guilt for what I've done to her and the very real instinct to kill every motherfucker who’s spoken to her since I’ve been away. My fingers itch to bind her legs and arms with my rope and haul her home with me where she belongs. Anger simmers beneath the surface, fueled by my own longing for her. I've missed her so much, and now that I've finally allowed myself to admit it, the obsession that's been lurking takes over. I start my truck and pull back onto the road, my grip on the steering wheel tight. The cabin, the wilderness—it all fades into the background as my singular focus becomes reaching Hillcrest University. I’ll burn it down to nothing but ashes if I have to. My doll is coming home with me. No other outcome is acceptable.

I dial Olivia's number, my heart pounding in my chest. Each ring goes unanswered, and it's only a matter of time before her voicemail picks up. I grit my teeth and leave a message, my voice laced with a mix of frustration and desperation.

“Olivia, it's me. I know I messed up, okay? But I need to see you, to explain. Just... please answer your phone,” I tell her, sighing before I end the call. It was one phone call, and she could be in class, but my entire body is tight with tension, wondering why she didn’t immediately pick up. Hillcrest men are not patient, and I’m no exception. I’ve seen Ethan kick the bedroom door in if Isabella locks it and taunts him by not opening it quickly enough, and I’m realizing that I’m quite literally at his delusional level of obsession at this moment.

The road stretches out before me, and I stop looking at the speedometer because, at this point, I wouldn’t stop even if I saw flashing lights. I’m determined to reach Hillcrest as fast as I can. What if she’s been hurt, and Landon is too preoccupied with his twin to notice or give a fuck? What if she trusted the wrong person, and they hurt her because she felt like she didn’t have anyone to count on?

She didn’t, you fucker. She counted on you, and you let her down.

—

I arrive at Hillcrest University, and a heavy sense of dread settles in my chest like a lead weight. This place holds memories both bitter and sweet. I used to be the coach of the Hillcrest hockey team, guiding young athletes toward their goals, before my world came crashing down when my wife attempted to murder our entire family. If I’m honest with myself, I wouldn’t have been able to continue to work here much longer regardless of what she did. It was too much temptation with Olivia on campus, and I was finding it harder and harder to keep my hands to myself. She was beginning to act out, challenge me, and instead of taking it in stride like I did with my other daughters, I had the overwhelming urge to punish her, dominate her, make her bend to my will.

As I walk through campus, lost in my singular mission to find Olivia, Donovan, the assistant coach who stepped up to replace me, attempts to flag me down and strike up a conversation. I don’t have time for this shit. I can feel my entire body buzzing with adrenaline. My mind is laser-focused on one thing and one thing only.

I rudely brush past him, not caring about social niceties. Every second counts. I continue to call Olivia's phone over and over, desperation creeping into my chest, welling up in my throat, and it feels like I might choke. Like a lifeline, the phone crackles like someone has answered. At nearly the same exact time, I see a flash of her bright blonde hair in the distance, a sight that simultaneously stirs longing and jealousy within me. She's speaking to some guy who looks to be around her age, and the sight makes my blood boil. I'm ready to storm over there and beat the shit out of him and scoop her up in my arms.

But then I hear her voice, and it’s cold and distant. "I have nothing to say to you," she says, and the words hit me like a punch to the gut. She hangs up before I can respond, and a surge of anger courses through me. I can't let my emotions get the best of me now. I need a plan, a way to approach her without jeopardizing my plan. There are too many people around to get away with dragging her away, and I can already tell by her attitude that she’s not going to go quietly.

I watch as she tucks her phone away, her face showing every emotion she’s feeling right now. She’s angry, but she’s still sad, which means I still have a chance to repair the damage I’ve done. The guy she's with tries to offer her some comfort, but I see the look on his face. He’s full of shit, whatever he’s saying to her. I can't help but feel the rage of jealousy

clawing at my chest at the sight of another man attempting to get close to her. But I notice something, something that soothes the green monster inside me, if only just a little bit. Olivia doesn't lean into him, doesn't seek his embrace like she did with me. She doesn't seem as at ease with this fucker, and she certainly doesn’t look at him the way she did me.

My thoughts churn with a mix of emotions, from possessiveness to anger. I can't help but wonder if she allowed him to kiss her, to hold her in his arms while I was out in the woods, just to spite me. I know it's my fault that I abandoned her and ignored her, but now I'm ready to claim her, and despite the walls she has up, there’s not a thing she can do to change the outcome.

I watch them from afar until I see them go separate ways, and my doll heads into one of the academic buildings, presumably to go to her class. I pull out my phone and head toward Landon’s dorm. He probably pays little attention to Olivia’s schedule, but I’m sure Sophia will have the information I need to catch Olivia by herself.

Maybe I’ll have a little fun with her before her fate is sealed.

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5

OLIVIA

I make my way across the hallowed grounds of Hillcrest, the weight of sadness and anger mingling together and tugging at my every step. I hadn’t prepared myself for what I would do if Dad ever contacted me again or more importantly, how I would feel hearing his voice again. I'm dressed in my ice-skating attire, my skates slung casually over my shoulder. I don't compete in figure skating; I do it for fun, for the solace it brings. The high ponytail in my hair, held together by a light blue bow, bobs with each step. Instantly, the memories of the way he touched me, held me, kissed me flood my mind. For a moment, I was that brokenhearted girl he’d dropped off and ignored without a second thought, but I quickly recovered and let the anger overtake me. That’s the only way I’m going to be able to resist him. I can't help but feel betrayed by his silence, his refusal to answer any of my calls, and the best thing for me to do is just ignore him before he leaves me completely gutted again.

I still can't shake the feeling that I'm being watched, followed. It's not a sinister sensation, but rather a longing one, an ache that I've grown accustomed to. I glance around, but there's no sign of my dad. There’s no way he’d come here anyway. He’d talk himself out of it, I’m sure. He’s not like Ethan. He’ll always do the right thing, or at the very least, what he thinks is the best thing. He must not realize that I feel like I’ve been poisoned, the life being sucked out of me slowly since we’ve been apart. If he did, would it matter? Would he ever choose me over what he thinks is right? I know he means well. What happened between us wasn’t okay on any level. I berate myself for imagining things, for missing him so fiercely

that I conjure his presence where there is nothing.There's a hole in my heart, a hunger for something I can never have.

I push open the creaky side door of the icehouse, the cool air inside instantly soothing the turmoil in my mind. The pristine expanse of the ice rink calls to me, its surface shimmering under the soft glow of overhead lights. The Zamboni driver is finishing up freshening the ice, but the building is mostly empty save for a few players chatting as they head out of the building to rest up from practice. Dad might not be the coach anymore, but I know the drill. They'll go to the dining hall and stuff their faces and then go back to their dorms to crash until their big game tonight. I carry my skates over my shoulder, their blades clinking together in a comforting rhythm.

As I step further into the building, my eyes are drawn to the far end of the rink. Landon is in the midst of what appears to be a tense conversation with a guy I only know as Killian. He's the son of one of Dad's friends I've never met. He lives out in the wilderness near where Dad built his cabin with his entire family, but last year, Killian was sent to Hillcrest. He's something of a hockey prodigy from what I've heard Dad and my brothers say, but he didn't want to come here, and it showed. It's actually shocking to see him speaking to Landon because I don't think I've ever seen him say more than two words to anyone. Some vicious rumors were swirling around about Killian when he first arrived because he wasn't used to city living. Some people even said that he was sent here because his parents caught him trying to fuck his sister. I remember cringing because of the things that go on in my family, and it was a stark reminder that just because it doesn't bother us doesn't mean the world will accept it.

Landon's dark hair is matted to his forehead from sweat and he's still clad in his hockey pads and pants, a frown etched on his face. I watch as Landon waves Killian off. The Zamboni is too loud for me to decipher what they're saying, but neither of them seems to be angry at each other. Killian pulls the hood from his sweatshirt up over his dark hair, and I note that he's already showered and changed into Hillcrest sweats. His usually plump lips are drawn tight into a thin line, and he looks like he's holding his breath. His eyes are wild as he brushes past me, slamming his large body into the side door and rushing out into the crisp air. When the Zamboni pulls off the ice, I realize that Landon's irritation wasn't with Killian because he's frowning down at Sophia. Her long, black hair is elegantly woven into a

pristine French braid, adorned with that light pink bow she seems to love. Landon kneels down in front of his twin, inspecting her ankle with a furrowed brow.

Sophia is the only one who seems capable of calming Landon's stormy temperament, and that’s the only reason I bother approaching them because, after the whole ordeal with Dad calling, I’m not really in the mood for his broody ass. She glances up as I approach, a warm smile gracing her delicate features. "Hey, Olivia," she greets.

Landon shoots me a warning look like I’m going to walk over and club her in the head for absolutely no reason. Hopefully, if Dad did lose his mind and come here, he’s only here to drag Landon’s dumbass out into the wilderness where he can fight a bear or punch trees for a hobby. He is so fucking surly, it’s a wonder his face doesn’t shrivel up. Sophia is all that seems to matter to him, and I get it, but geez.

I glance at Sophia’s ankle, and she waves me off. “I’m fine. I wasn’t paying attention and twisted it walking down the bleachers while Land was practicing.”

Landon palms her ankle, rotating it, and then huffing when she winces. “It could be broken.”

“You’re doing it again. I’m fine. I just need to keep my weight off of it for a while.” Sophia reaches up and strokes the side of his face, and he instantly leans into her touch like he’s never felt anything so pleasurable in his life.

"Have you heard from Dad?" I break the tension because they’re staring at each other and unfortunately, I can’t dissolve into the floor. “He called me today.”

Sophia smiles, and I almost forget that I’m the only one who wants to run Dad over with his own truck at the moment. "He did? What did he say? Is he coming to the game tonight?" she asks excitedly, and that’s all it takes to make Landon jealous for absolutely zero reason.

Landon chimes in, though his voice carries a note of annoyance. “No, he’s not,” he assures her, and she gives him a perplexed look. She’s older than me, but she seems younger, more naïve. I truly don’t think she understands what Landon wants, maybe even needs from her, but that’s not my place to tell her. Landon directs his attention toward me when he asks, “What did he say when he called?”

“Not much. I hung up on him. He’s not the only one who can ignore people,” I say, and Sophia lets out a surprised sound, but it’s overshadowed by Landon’s sharp chuckle.

“You did not,” he snickers. “The old man is probably power-walking here on sheer rage.” He says it to be funny, and Sophia laughs, but my stomach sinks because I hadn’t thought about that. I hadn’t thought that if I pissed Dad off enough that he might become as unhinged as Ethan. I mean, the Hillcrest men are not exactly known for their bedside manner.

Sophia leans over and whispers something into Landon's ear, her words too low for me to hear. But whatever she says seems to ease the tension in his shoulders. With a soft sigh, he nods, his frown fading as he scoops Sophia up into his arms.

"We're heading out," he grumbles, not even bothering to say goodbye to me.

Sophia waves cheerfully, "Come by after the game, Liv," she calls out. "We can have a movie night."

I manage a small smile, my bitterness dissipating in the wake of Sophia's sweetness. "I will," I promise, watching as Landon carries Sophia out of the icehouse.

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6

GRANT

I watch from my hidden vantage point outside the icehouse, my eyes fixed on the door. The air is cold, and the night is dark, but I can't afford to be seen. Not yet.

I met up with Landon earlier, and he assured me he'd stay behind to make sure everyone was out of the icehouse to ensure Olivia will be alone when I enter. I made it clear that he was not to tell Sophia what my plan was. As much as I'd love to see my other daughter, I can't risk her tipping off Olivia.

Sophia and Landon emerge from the icehouse, and I realize he's carrying her. I breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that Olivia must be alone in the arena now. My heart races with anticipation, and I can't help but feel annoyed that they stayed behind longer than they should have.

Landon stops just outside the icehouse, their voices hushed in conversation. Sophia appears distressed, her body language tense and at first, I think it's because when he lets her slide down to touch the ground, she's favoring one of her feet like it's sore, but then I realize that it's something else. I strain to hear their words, but the distance makes it impossible, and I'm still not willing to show myself and risk blowing my cover. I know she's been having panic attacks since the attack, and that's what appears to be happening now. Landon reaches into his hockey bag, retrieving a small bottle of pills. My eyes narrow as I watch this exchange.

He pushes Sophia to sit down on a nearby bench and holds her hands gently, his face filled with concern. She obediently takes one of the pills and washes it down with a swig from his water bottle. The sight of Landon

taking care of her, his protective gestures, doesn't go unnoticed by me. His jaw clenches with tension, his worry for her evident in every move he makes. He runs his hand over the top of her head, allowing her long braid to slide through his hand. They don't notice me hiding in the shadows, and I continue to watch as they walk away together, wrapped up in their own world. I realize that Landon is more aware than I suspected when he looks over his shoulder and nods his head toward the icehouse as if he knows I'm nearby.

As they disappear, my thoughts return to Olivia. This is my chance. I can't afford to waste any more time. I push away from my hiding spot and make my way toward the entrance. My heart pounds in my chest as I approach the entrance to the arena. This is it. I'm about to see her again, to be near her. I can't help but wonder if she's thought of me during all these months. Has she touched herself, thinking of me? Even through the hurt and anger, has she thought of the night in the shed when I should have taken everything she was willing to give me?

I step through the door, and there she is, on the ice, her skating dress clinging to her figure and making my cock twitch and my mouth water. I want to slide my hands down her hourglass figure. I want to feel how perfectly her tits fit in my hands. I also want to rip it off of her body, bend her over and spank her ass for hanging up on me. I want to slide my fingers inside her pussy and feel how wet she gets when I punish her.

Olivia's movements are fluid as she glides across the ice. Her concentration is unwavering, and she's completely absorbed in her skating. The rhythmic sound of her blades against the ice is hypnotic, drawing me closer.

I watch her with a mix of longing, jealousy, and possessiveness. She's mine in every way that matters. I've allowed her to slip through my fingers once, but not again. My obsession with her has only deepened during our time apart, and now it's time to make her understand. How can she be so unbothered after having spoken to me for the first time in months? She doesn't seem shaken, and that's a problem for me. If she wants to be angry, fine, I deserve that. But this? Like I mean nothing to her after everything we shared. I'm fully aware that all of this is my fault, but I will not let her dismiss me or replace me. That will never happen.

She twirls gracefully, her arms extended, and I can't help but think about how those same arms wrapped around me, begged me to claim her as my

own. I remember the sensation of her body pressed against mine, the heat of her skin against my own. The thought is intoxicating and something that I've tried to push away for so long, but now that I'm here looking at her, I realize that I can never live without it. Not even if we're shunned by society. Not even if I've broken her to the point that she no longer wants me. Nothing matters to me anymore except for her, and I don't care how long that takes to make her understand.

I want to take her by surprise, to make her pay for talking back to me, but also startle her enough that she can't hide behind any kind of wall she's built up with all the hurt I caused by leaving her. Because I know this building like the back of my hand, she's in for a treat. I know where the light switches are, and I'll use that knowledge to my advantage. She's like a sitting duck right now and has no idea, and that's even more reason for her to come to the cabin with me. I was in too much of a panic when I left her, making her think I didn't want her, but now I realize that the safest place for my doll is right next to me at all times. She can't be protected here at Hillcrest, and she needs to see that firsthand. As I sneak over to the switches, I realize Olivia is about to learn a lesson she won't soon forget. She's mine, and I intend to show her just how much she belongs to me.

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7

OLIVIA

I feel a sense of emptiness settle over me, and I hate that I want the feeling that Dad is here watching me to come back. It’s a delusion, I’m sure, and yet, I want to feel like he’s here with me, stalking me. I want to pretend that I mean more to him than one phone call in three months. I can't help but wonder if my father would ever act on the desires that simmered between us if things had been different. If Mom never tried to kill my siblings, would he have eventually snapped and whisked me away to the wilderness? I dream of that sometimes, even in the hottest part of my anger toward him. I still fall asleep with my hand in my panties, thinking about what it might be like if we lived in a different world. A world where we weren’t father and daughter. A world where he could love me openly. He may not have loved me the way I wanted him to, but he desired me in a way I don’t think he’s ever wanted anyone else. No matter what he says or does, no one will convince me otherwise. I felt the hurried neediness of his hands on me. His mouth was ravenous, like he could not get enough of me. For a man who is usually so controlled, that night—even if just for a moment—he was feral for me.

I'm gliding across the smooth ice, the rhythmic swish of my skates a soothing balm for my overactive mind. Each graceful movement takes me further from the chaos of my world, a brief escape from the tangled web of my thoughts. I try to push them aside, to focus on the sound of my blades carving the ice.

But then, the sensation of a presence, his presence I've been feeling all day, nags at the back of my mind again. What if it’s not him? What if it’s

my subconscious warning me of someone dangerous, and I'm just so twisted up in my head about him that I'm ignoring it? I look around, my heart racing, but there's no one here. I'm truly alone. I berate myself for letting my longing for my dad play tricks on my mind.

As if on cue, suddenly the lights in the icehouse flicker off, and I stumble, my skates catching on the once smooth ice I've marked up. I fall, my palms hitting the cold surface, and a gasp escapes my lips. Panic bubbles up as I scramble to get up and run. But my skates betray me, making it hard to gain traction on the ice. What if it's Killian? What if he really is the psycho everyone says he is? He looked absolutely livid when he stormed out earlier.

"Hello? I'm—" I say, but I'm cut off by a large, male body covering mine and pressing me down on the ice. I instantly know it's my dad, and that both comforts me and infuriates me all at the same time. I thrash against him, but he's too strong. I'm not a short woman, but he's a Hillcrest man, which means he's well over six feet tall. My red flag is that in this moment, I'm so angry, I think I can take him.

"Get off me!" I scream, but he covers my mouth with his large palm, and his body is eerily still, like this is the calmest he's ever been in his entire life. I spread my legs, trying to gather the momentum to scissor them, to hopefully kick at him with my skates, but he takes the opportunity to jam his thigh between my legs to better hold me down. His cock is thick and hard against my ass. His jeans and the thin material of my skating dress do nothing to hide his arousal, and I hate that my body jerks back against him like I'm starved for his touch. My nipples pull tightly, poking against the cold ice, and it's a vast contrast from the heat of his body.

"You hung up on me, doll. I thought maybe you were hurt, or sick, but here you are, enjoying yourself on the ice like you didn't even miss me." He growls the words, using his warm hand to brush my hair away from my neck. I can feel his cock jump with excitement as he grinds against my ass and roughly grabs my hair, tugging my head to the side. I had no idea he was on campus, but even if I had, I still would have hung up on him. I start to mumble, thrashing against him, and he must want to hear my reply because he pulls his hand slightly off of my mouth, enough at least so I can speak.

"Maybe I was hurt and sick for the weeks you left me on my own to fend for myself, and now I don't need you," I lie. I'll always need him, but

he doesn’t deserve to hear those words come out of my mouth. He grips my hair harder, yanking back with a force that actually hurts me. I cry out, but my pussy betrays me, clenching around nothing and making me wish his cock was pushing inside me instead of only grinding down on my ass.

“You’re being a very bad doll,” he grunts out, lifting up long enough to flip me over on my back before he lowers his weight back down on top of me. I shiver and I don’t think any of it has to do with the cold ice I’ve been lying on in a thin skating dress. He uses his free hand to wrench my legs further apart and flexes his hips against mine, his thick cock rubbing directly against my pussy. I can feel the weight of his length, and even in the darkness, I can feel his whole body tense up like he wasn’t expecting this to feel so good. He groans, letting out a long breath as he rocks himself against me. I should be screaming, kicking, throwing a fit until someone comes in to check on us because that’s exactly what he deserves after leaving me hanging for so long, but I’m too caught up in the moment to do any of those things. I gasp at the thought of him pushing inside of me, and he must be thinking about the same thing because he curses, “Fuck, baby. I should have fucked you that night. I should have taken what I’ve wanted. I should have fucked your tight little cunt until I didn’t have a choice but to take you out into the wilderness with me.”

Tears sting the back of my eyes, and I can feel how wet my pussy is getting at his dirty words. He’s too late. I don’t trust him. I don’t know why he’s finally decided to come here, but I don’t believe that he regrets leaving me. It wouldn’t have taken him three months to figure that out if he really cared about me. “Get off of me. I don’t want to talk to you,” I tell him harshly, and I have to bite my bottom lip because even with the heat of his body seeping into mine, the ice on my backside is sending chills down my body. “Go back to your precious cabin. I’m fine on my own,” I lie again. I haven’t been fine since I realized how deep this crush I’ve had on my dad actually goes. I haven’t been fine since the night he kissed me, stole my breath, and then left me wriggling in an empty bed, wishing I could feel the stubble of his five o’clock shadow scraping against my cheek as he devoured my mouth.

I can’t see his expression, but I can feel the anger rolling off of him at my words. His hand is in my hair again, pulling hard like he’s actually thinking of dragging me out of here caveman style. He’s not the same careful man he was the night he finally kissed me. He’s unhinged, ready to

strike and take back everything he gave away the day he sent me back to school and avoided my pleading phone calls. I arch up, trying to figure out if I can wiggle out of his grasp because I need to think straight. I need to speak to him when he doesn't have me pinned beneath him because I'm going to forget all of the hurt of the last three months and beg him to pull the crotch of my skating dress to the side and fuck me like he wishes he would have the night in his shed. He groans against my ear when his cock rubs against my slit because of my movements. He must realize that I'm trying to wriggle away from him because his hand goes to my throat, squeezing and effectively holding me down on the ice.

"Why are you even here now? Couldn't find a woman willing to fill your bed out in the middle of nowhere?" I grind out, hating how small my voice sounds. "I've moved on. You were right, Dad. What happened that night was a mistake. It's wrong, remember? Isn't that what you said? Isn't that the last thing you said to me before you dropped me off without so much as a 'sorry for almost fucking you and then throwing you away like trash, doll'?" My teeth chatter on the last word, and a shiver runs through my whole body.

"Watch your mouth, doll." I quiver again at the use of his nickname for me, even if he's only doing it to spite me for what I just said to him. I'm glad I can't see him right now because I know the second I look into those stormy eyes of his, it'll be over for me, and I'll cave. "You can spin it any way you want, but you gave yourself to me that night, and I intend on cashing in," he growls, his mouth trailing against my neck and down my chest. He finds my hard nipple beneath the thin fabric of my skating dress and bites down hard, causing me to cry out and my hips to thrust up against his. Even if he's being rough with me, and it's not at all how I'd dreamed or hoped this would be, I can't help but want him. His body fits so perfectly against mine, and I know he feels it too by the way his groan rumbles out of his chest and reverberates against mine. "I didn't come here to punish you, but I will if that's what you and that sassy mouth of yours want from me. Is that what you want? Do you want to fight before we make up for good? Either way, you're leaving with me tonight. There's no escaping me, but I'll let you choose how this goes down." His voice is even, but the husky undertone tells me that he's just barely keeping himself together. I feel him move down my body, peppering warm kisses down my chest and stomach. He stops at my navel like he can somehow detect where it is even through

my dress and presses his face there, breathing in deeply. “I missed you so fucking much, doll.” My whole body trembles at his admission because he sounds so sincere, and I want to believe him with everything in me, but I almost didn’t survive this man once. I don’t think I can do it a second time when he invariably gets me out of his system and decides once again that we’re better apart.

“You’re too late!” I scream at him, but my body stiffens when I feel his fingers at the crotch of my skating dress.

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OLIVIA

Even though I can't see him, I feel that he's pushed up on his knees, but he's still using one hand to hold me down on the ice. He's far too big for me to push him off, but I put up a good fight regardless, kicking my legs and thrashing, just trying anything to get him to let me go. I've thought about this moment for so long. I've wanted him for even longer than I can remember, but I don't want it to be like this. I don't want him to fuck me because he's angry that I'm ignoring him. I don't want him to do something that he's going to try and take back just because he's a Hillcrest man and his ego is bruised.

"It's never too late," he tells me, and his tone is final. His fingers are longer than I remember, and they feel scalding against my frozen skin. "You've always been mine, Olivia. You know it, I know it, everyone fucking knows it. Your mother knew it, and I've fought it for too long." I stop moving when he mentions Mom. Did she know what we were doing that night? Did she see the way I looked at him like he hung the moon? Because for me, he fucking did. He was everything, and I trusted him wholeheartedly even when he was standoffish. I wanted to soothe him. I wanted to be the soft place where he landed even though I knew that wasn't my right. He belonged to someone else even if his heart wasn't in it.

I start to retort, to tell him that I never second-guessed us, not even when I knew no one else would understand. I don't get the chance, though. I feel his warm, ragged breath against my cold inner thighs first, and he gives me no time to react before he's pulling the fabric to the side, and I feel his tongue flick out and lick down my slit. I cry out at the unfamiliar

sensation, my hips bucking up just as a curse leaves his mouth, reverberating against my skin. He doesn't back off. He's kissing my pussy so intimately that my toes curl inside my skates, and I can't tell if I'm trying to pull away or push closer to his devilish tongue. Maybe both. Definitely both.

"You're as sweet as I knew you'd be," he murmurs. His fingers grip my hips and jerk me up to allow him to have his fill. I gasp because the contrast of his bruising hold on me and the pleasure coursing through my body from his tongue's vigorous onslaught has every nerve ending in my body set on fire.

"It's too much," I cry out when he sucks on my clit, his fingers biting into my skin so harshly I know his fingerprints will be there tomorrow.

"It's not enough," he tells me before licking from my clit down to my opening, pressing his tongue inside me. When he makes his way back up to my bundle of nerves, my whole body convulses, and I swear I can feel him smiling against my bare pussy as I come all over his mouth. The stubble shadowing his cheeks and chin scrapes against my sensitive skin and sends shivers that feel electric through my body.

I squeak out an "Oh!" when I hear the heavy doors to the icehouse open, and my fight-or-flight kicks in. If someone sees us like this, it'll be broadcast across the entire campus before I can even get my skates off. I try to move, twisting over on my stomach only because he allows me to. He grabs me by the hair and pulls my head back, and he kisses my neck before whispering, "You can fight me on this, doll, but you're coming home with me." I don't respond because that quickly he's gone, probably realizing whoever is walking in will flip the lights on, and no one knows the climate here at Hillcrest better than Dad. Despite the things he's saying, he knows how bad it would be if what we did got out. Or maybe he's come to his senses, and he's already planning his trip back into the wilderness.

I manage to smooth my dress out and get to a standing position before the bright lights flick to life, and I cover my eyes from the shock of it all. My stomach drops when I see who it is.

Frank rushes toward me, concern etched on his face. "Are you okay?" he asks, his voice filled with what I think is supposed to be genuine worry, but there's a bite of annoyance in his tone. He's saying something else, but my mind is elsewhere. My eyes dart around the huge room, but there's no sign of another soul, and definitely not Dad.

I blink, realizing I'd tuned Frank out completely when he puts his hand on my shoulder. "I... yeah, I'm fine," I stammer, trying to collect myself.

He tugs me toward the opening of the rink, his touch lingering for a moment longer than necessary. "What happened? Was someone else in here?" he asks, his brown eyes searching mine. My stomach drops when he moves closer, so I sidestep him the best I can.

“No, it was a freak thing, really. The lights went out, and I fell and couldn’t find my bearings,” I say to Frank. “I’m fine. I just lost track of time. I need to get back to my room because I’m meeting up with my sister.” It’s like what? A half lie? I did tell Sophia I’d watch a movie with her later. I just left the whole ‘my dad is here and trying to fuck the sass out of me’ part out.

Frank frowns and I don’t give a shit. I sit down on one of the benches and start to unlace my ice skates, the urgency to leave overwhelming me.

“I can walk you,” he says, trying to grab for my arm when I go to stand up, but I swivel out of his way, slipping on my shoes and putting my tied skates over my shoulder.

“Oh, that’s so nice, but I’m really fine. I have a few places I need to stop at on the way,” I say quickly and dismissively on the way out of the building. I veer left before he can respond, pick up my pace, and head to the only place I can think of that might be a safe place to calm down.

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9

OLIVIA

My heart beats like a trapped bird in a glass cage, and I can't shake the tremors that cling to me like a shadow. I needed to be alone, to sort out the mess of emotions swirling inside me. Isabella, my twin sister, used to be my confidante before Ethan claimed her. I'm glad that she's happy and with him right where she needs to be. Now more than ever, I need her here with me. I've never been as close to Sophia because she and Landon have always been each other's person. If I didn't want Landon to know something, I knew not to say anything to her. It wasn't malicious on her part. They're just connected in a way that I've never seen before.

I don't want Frank to follow me to my dorm, not that he doesn't already probably know where I live, but still. I hurry toward the one place on campus where I can escape, the library. It'll be busy this time of day. I just hope I can blend in with the way I'm dressed. I should have put my Hillcrest attire back on before I left, but with the whole Dad giving me the best orgasm of my life and then Frank stopping him from fucking me right there on the ice, it slipped my mind. That dress code violation hearing with the honor board would be wild if I told the truth. Every step makes me feel like I'm being watched, and I glance over my shoulder repeatedly, paranoia crawling up my spine. Weirdly, I'm more worried about Frank following me than Dad. If Dad wants me, he'll get me. I know that much. I just need to get my thoughts together so I don't fold under pressure. He needs to know that I'm not the girl he dropped off three months ago. He's damaged me, and I'm not sure he can heal those wounds even if he wanted to.

It's ironic. Despite how rough Dad was with me earlier, how utterly unhinged he seemed because I was ignoring him, I still feel safer with him than with Frank. Frank's persistent advances and overbearing presence send shivers down my spine for all the wrong reasons.

Finally, I reach the library. Its Gothic architecture is domineering in a comforting way, even in daylight. People stare as I walk by, and I realize with a flush of embarrassment that my skating dress is not going to blend into the crowd no matter how small I try to make myself. Thank god the skirt covers where I'm sure the panties of it are soaked from Dad's tongue and my desire for him.

Once inside, I spot Vaughn, one of my brother's ice hockey teammates, looming over his girlfriend, Reese, who sits at a table, sketching on a pad of paper. Vaughn's intense glare is fixed on Reese in a way that almost makes him look psychotic. I don't know him, but I've heard things about him, and while I've always tried to let the Hillcrest gossip be just that, I don't doubt anything I've heard about this guy. His messy black hair falls into his eyes as he leans forward to whisper something to Reese. A faint blush colors her cheeks before she sobers, collecting herself from whatever he whispered to her. I know her from one of my classes, and she's always been polite to me. She doesn't seem like the kind of girl to date Vaughn just because he's a Hillcrest hockey player or the fact that I'm sure his abs look like they were carved in stone, so I guess he's got some redeeming qualities that he doesn't show to everyone else. Reese looks up when I reach their table, pushes her bright platinum blonde hair over her shoulder, and meets my eyes with a knowing smirk. She clearly understands that ignoring Vaughn is only making him more enamored with her.

"Hey, I'm sorry to bother you guys," I say, looking from Reese to her guard dog. I don't need him using my head as a hockey puck for talking to his girl.

Despite Vaughn's frown at the interruption, Reese is quick to respond. She seems to recognize that something is wrong, and at this moment, I'm glad I look disheveled. She gets up and places her hands on my shoulders, her eyes filled with concern.

"Liv, are you okay?" She touches my arm. "You're freezing."

I can't tell her about Dad, obviously, and the fact that he ate my pussy in the rink, so I concoct a quick lie. "Someone approached me in the icehouse

while I was skating," I say, my voice trembling slightly, "but I managed to get away from him."

Reese's eyes widen with worry, and Vaughn looks on, bored and unphased, as if to say, ‘But did you die?’

"What can I do to help?" Reese asks sincerely, and I'm grateful for her kindness.

I glance around the library, my heart still pounding, searching for any sign of Dad when that feeling I’m being watched zips through me. He’s close. I can feel his presence, his eyes on me, but I can't spot him.

"Could I borrow your jacket?" I ask, my voice shaking. "I feel exposed, and I don't want to walk back to my dorm right now in case that guy is still following me."

Reese's smile is warm as she says, “Of course! Do you want us to walk with you?”

I shake my head in the negative before saying, "No, I don't want to drag you guys into this anymore than I already have." She doesn't question me, but I see the way Vaughn is side-eyeing me. I suppose he's caught on that if it really was a random man in the icehouse, I would want to surround myself with as many people as possible. Reese is already handing me her blazer, and I set my things on the table where she was drawing what looks like a sketch of Vaughn sleeping. I look away because it feels more intimate than if I’d seen nudes in her camera roll. The way she drew him makes him look less, well, Vaughn, and more… sweet? It must be how she sees him because I watch as Vaughn pulls Reese close, kissing the top of her head. His eyes scan the library, on alert, as if he's ready to protect her at any moment from the mystery man I made up from the icehouse. Landon probably wasn’t exaggerating when he said Vaughn is both ruthless on and off the ice.

“Thank you so much. I owe you,” I tell her, quickly grabbing my things and rushing away toward the stairs. I know there’s a quiet corner on the balcony that overlooks the campus. It's outfitted with outdoor furniture, inviting students to read and study while enjoying the fresh air, but hardly anyone comes up here.

Taking a deep breath, I exhale slowly, trying to calm my racing heart. The sun is starting to set, the air is crisp, and the rustling leaves provide a soothing backdrop to my chaotic thoughts. I feel a bit more composed as I descend the outdoor stairs on the side of the library. The feeling of being

watched is gone, and I wonder if Dad came to his senses. Is he already on the road heading back to his cabin? Will I not hear from him again for three months?

Thankfully, there's no sign of Frank as I make my way back to my dorm, still wearing Reese's jacket. Now that my emotions have settled, my anger toward Dad resurfaces, clawing up my chest and into my throat like it might choke me. Or maybe I’m just remembering the way his calloused hand felt around my neck. A shiver runs through me, and I try to shake the feelings off. I should not have enjoyed the way he dominated me. We didn’t discuss it beforehand, and I’d never thought I would be so turned on by something like that, but I was. I still am. I wanted him to take me roughly, to show me how little control he really has around me. I want to be consumed by him so badly, but I can’t let myself fall into that trap. I’m not even sure what my plan is because deep down I know he’s right.

There’s no escaping a Hillcrest man.

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OLIVIA

I decide that I can’t escape him, but I can make claiming me difficult. I can make him understand the gravity of his actions and the state he left me in even if it wasn’t his intention. If he wants me, he’s going to have to work for it. I'll make him grovel. Legend has it, a Hillcrest man has never apologized for a thing in his life, but I’m willing to hold out for it. I rush across the campus, my heart still pounding from the orgasm he literally pulled from me. It might not have happened the way I expected or even wished it would, but the way my legs are still trembling tells me that I’d enjoy anything that man did to me. The chill in the air nips at my skin, but I barely notice it. All I can think about is getting back to my dorm room, a sanctuary where I can collect my thoughts.

As I approach the door to my room, my fingers fumble with my key. But when I lean on the door, it swings open easily. Panic surges through me like a tidal wave. I never leave my door unlocked. Someone must have been in here. The thought sends shivers down my spine because I’m not sure if it was Dad or Frank. I peer inside, seeing droplets of blood on the floor, and that’s enough for me to not want to find out.

Without thinking, I drop my ice skates and run. I run down the corridor, the echoes of my footsteps reverberating in the empty hall. My heart hammers in my chest, and I feel my chest constrict when my phone, still clutched in my hand, makes a noise signaling a text has popped through. My only thought is to reach my sister Sophia's room, where I might buy myself some time.

I pause to look at my phone and see that it’s Dad.

“Stop hiding from me, doll,” is all it says.

I keep walking, looking over my shoulder until I reach the stone staircase, taking the steps two at a time as I descend to the floor where Sophia's room is located. My breath comes out in ragged gasps as I approach her door. My knuckles rap against it in a hurried rhythm.

The door swings open, revealing my brother Landon. He stands shirtless in dark sweatpants, his hair damp as if he's just stepped out of the shower. His expression is one of clear annoyance as he takes in my disheveled appearance.

"What do you want?" he asks, his voice low and gruff. "What the fuck are you wearing?" He eyes the blazer that is a little too short on my wrists and waist, covering my skating dress.

All I manage is a breathless, "Someone... someone was in my room."

“No shit, Dad is storming around like a psychopath looking for you.” He rolls his eyes.

“My room was open and there was blood on the floor and I—” I’m speaking loudly, and I truly believe that’s the only reason he steps back, huffing as he steps aside to let me in. As I enter, I can't help but feel a strange mixture of relief and unease.

Landon's eyes narrow as I step inside their room, and he doesn't bother hiding his irritation. "Obviously there’s blood. Dad didn’t like the fact that Frank was pawing all over you. What did you think was going to happen? I had to take another fucking shower because he called me up there to help him move the asshole down to the cellar." My mouth gapes at the way he says it all so easily. Dad killed Frank? In my room? And Landon helped him hide the body.

“You helped him move the body?” I don’t know why I’m asking him this other than the fact I’m in shock, and I don’t know what else to say.

“Obviously,” he says, and I guess that’s his favorite word today. He acts like this is normal, and I should just get with the program. “Look, you need to just go with him. He’s going to burn the campus to the ground if you don’t, and he’s already scared Sophia once,” he says, his jaw tightening in a display that says he is not happy about the last part.

I ignore his rudeness and push my way further inside. My gaze falls on Sophia, who's just come out of the shower, her wet hair clinging to her shoulders. She's wrapped in a fluffy towel, and her eyes are red and puffy. It's clear she's been crying.

I blurt out, "Did you two take a shower together or something?"

Landon's jaw flexes like he’s grinding his back molars, but he pointedly ignores my question. Instead, he turns to a small backpack on the floor, quickly retrieving a small pill bottle. I watch as he carefully places one of the pills on Sophia's tongue and makes her swallow it with a sip of water.

Sophia looks at me with those big eyes that are so like her twin’s. "I know you're worried about me," she says softly, "especially with everything that happened with Isabella and Ethan. But I promise, Liv, I'm fine. Landon takes such good care of me, even when he doesn't have to."

I nod, trying to hide my concern. It's true, Landon has always been fiercely protective of her, even if he’s an asshole to everyone else. As Sophia continues to speak, my instincts pick up on something else. Landon's annoyance is anything but subtle. When Sophia assures me that there's nothing romantic between them, his expression twitches with irritation. “I was just really scared when I saw all that blood, it reminded me of—” she cuts herself off, her bottom lip trembling.

“Enough,” Landon says to her, but he’s looking at me when he tells her, “You don’t owe her anything. You need to rest.”

Sophia lies back on the bed, and Landon pulls the fluffy light pink comforter up around her. Her eyelids droop, and she already looks drowsy. I can't help but feel a mix of concern and frustration. She must have taken one of her pills to calm herself down, and suddenly, I feel like a bad sister because I don’t even know what medication she’s on or if she’s taking care of herself.

I glance at Landon, who's now sitting on the edge of the bed, his hand gently stroking Sophia's hair. "Does this happen often?" I ask, my voice softer now, worry creeping into my tone.

He looks at me, his expression dark. "She had a panic attack when we were leaving the rink. I think she could sense Dad or something." He shakes his head before continuing, “I wouldn’t leave her here alone, so when I took her up to your room, the blood must have sent her over the edge. She’ll be fine. I won’t leave her, I’ve already texted Vaughn to let him know I’m not coming to the game.” He’s looking down at her again, and I don’t miss the way his hand absently strokes down her side, his thumb brushing the swell of her breast. I want to press for more information, but Landon's protective demeanor stops me in my tracks. Instead, I watch as Sophia's breathing evens out, her features relaxing as the medication takes effect.

Landon's patience wears thin as I grab one of her Hillcrest-issued skirts and a white t-shirt. I slip into her bathroom and change, putting Reese’s blazer back on. If I’m going to play this game of cat and mouse with Dad, I need to blend in the best I can. I grimace when I realize I’ll just have to forgo panties because I’m sure if I try to borrow a pair from Sophia, Landon will short-circuit, and his brain will explode on the spot. When I exit the bathroom, Landon grabs me by the arm and pulls me forcefully toward the door. His grip is strong, and I wince at the pain.

"You need to just go with him. He’s going to do something to get himself in trouble if you play with him too long," he says firmly, his voice leaving no room for argument. "Just go back to your room and relax."

He nudges me out into the stone corridor and shuts the door with a finality that sends a shiver down my spine. I hear the lock click into place, sealing me out of their room. I'm alone now, left to contemplate his words.

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OLIVIA

Landon's voice echoing throughout my head takes root in my thoughts. Just give in. Let him have his way. Make it easy on yourself. That’s really what he was saying.

But I can't. I won't let Dad get the better of me, no matter how intense the storm of emotions he's awakened within me. The mere sight of him, the memory of his touch, makes me feel alive for the first time since we've been separated.

If he wants to play, he’s in for the game of his life.

If he’s scouring the campus looking for me, there’s one place he won’t be. His truck. I’ve been enamored by this man long enough to make an educated guess about what his movements were in coming here. Dad never locked his truck when he was the coach here because there’s no reason to at Hillcrest. The students here come from affluent backgrounds and wouldn’t need to break into someone’s car. I storm out of my dorm building, the cold wind biting at my skin. The night has fallen, and the moon casts eerie shadows across the campus. I can't see him, but I can sense him nearby, lurking in the darkness as if he were part of the night itself. If I’m going to get away with my plan, I’m going to have to be quick. I race toward the parking lot near the icehouse because that’s where he used to park when he was faculty, and old habits die hard. My pulse quickens and my nipples tighten under the thin white t-shirt I’m wearing with every step. My breath comes out in ragged puffs, and I can't help but look over my shoulder. Nothing. There’s no way to tell if it’s my imagination or if he’s hot on my

trail. I would think he’d be in the cellar getting rid of Frank, but I can’t be sure.

Finally, I see his old truck, the one Mom hated. The one he used to take me for rides in, hitting every bump in the road so I’d squeal and giggle with excitement. The memories of all the good times with him feel like they hit me right in the chest. I loved that man with every fiber of my soul, and that’s something, despite how things turned out, that is hard to shake. My trembling hands fumble with the door handle. Just as I manage to pull on it, something grips my hair, yanking me backward with a sudden, brutal pull. My heart leaps into my throat when he loosens his hold to turn me to face him as I stare into the depths of his dark eyes. This is the first time I’ve actually seen him since he’s been on campus, and the dangerous promise in his eyes is shocking. The metallic smell of blood fills my nostrils, and I glance down at his shirt. Whatever he did to Frank must have been brutal and unnecessarily cruel. He’s bigger, stronger, and much more skilled than Frank. He could have killed him quickly and probably painlessly, but the blood smattering his shirt tells me that it was anything but. "Where do you think you’re going, doll?" he hisses, and he barely sounds like the man I know. He’s angry, and I can practically feel his desire for me rolling off of his body.

“I was going to drive off into the forest and leave you here to fend for yourself,” I say flippantly. He’s got me right where he wants me, but he’ll have to gag me to get me to stop talking shit. I cock my head to the side and try not to wince when his fingers jerk my hair, dragging me to the bed of his pickup truck. “What are you going to do? Tie me to the bumper and drag me until I forget what you did?”

Before I can go on, he grabs a coiled length of rope and quickly binds my hands together in front of me. Despite the fact that I’m fighting him, pushing, shoving, kicking, and screaming, he works effortlessly as though I’m not putting up a fight at all. Panic surges through me as he hoists me into the driver’s side of the truck, positioning me on my hands and knees across the bench seat facing the passenger side window. His voice drips with menacing intensity as he ties my ankles together. "You'll never get away from me."

The icy steel of the truck's interior presses against my skin, but it's nothing compared to the chill of dread that seeps into my bones. I'm trapped, helpless, and at his mercy. The desire to fight back, to resist his

grip, surges within me, but I know it's no use in fighting him right now. As he starts the engine, I can only wonder where he'll take me and how he plans on punishing me. I won't give in to him, not again.

I can't let him break me again.

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OLIVIA

I can feel his anger radiating like a furnace against my bare backside. He hasn’t lifted my skirt to see that I’m not wearing any panties, but I still feel exposed. My attempts to wriggle free have only frustrated me. I’m struggling to keep myself up on my hands and knees because if I collapse, my legs will be on his lap, and I don’t want to be touching any part of him right now. My body is shaking, drained of energy. The dark, empty road stretches out before us, and I've lost count of the hours we've been driving.

"Have you finally given up?" His voice, edged with fury, breaks the silence. "Do you understand what you are to me?" The fucking nerve of him to be angry at me.

I can't bring myself to answer seriously, not when the threat of tears looms just beneath the surface. I will not fucking cry. Instead, I respond flippantly, trying to mask my fear. “I understand that you’re mad that I’m not falling in line to believe that you want me all of a sudden. It’s been three months,” I hiss out the words, my anger getting the better of me. He grunts but keeps driving, not reaching over to touch me. I know this is a game for him. He’s waiting for me to give in and touch him first or, at the very least, fall onto him. I’m going about this all wrong. I’m playing checkers when I need to be knocking his king down to where he belongs.

"I really have to pee," I say, my voice almost pleading. I need to make this believable if it’s going to work, and truth be told, I really do have to pee.

He sighs with annoyance, and my stomach lurches because I’m not sure if he sees through what I’m saying or if he’s just irritated that he has to pull

over. "You can hold it."

I squirm uncomfortably. I soften my voice, speaking to him the way I used to because I think that’s going to be the only thing that will break down his resolve toward me right now. "I have to go so bad it hurts, Dad. You don't want me to ruin your precious truck seat, do you?"

The groan that escapes him tells me he's conceding. We've been far away from a road not made of dirt for what seems like an hour, so I’m hoping he thinks it’s safe enough to stop. Dad pulls over into a small clearing, the engine rumbling as he kills it. The woods surround us, shrouded in darkness, and suddenly I’m scared because I have no idea how I’ll make it back to town on foot if I can lose him.

Quickly, he gets out of the truck and makes his way around to the passenger side and opens the door. He's rougher than necessary when he maneuvers me so he can loosen and pull away the rope around my ankles. With an impatient tug, he unties the rope binding my wrists, allowing me some freedom. "Don't even think about trying anything," he warns, tipping my chin up so I’m looking at him dead in the eye.

I stumble out of the truck, nearly falling as my feet hit the ground. I quickly move away from the truck and head into the woods, and I really wish right now I’d grabbed jeans from Sophia’s room because the tall brush and grasses scratch my skin. He’s right behind me when he says, “That’s far enough. No one will see you. Hurry up.” I roll my eyes at his tone. He shines the flashlight of his phone toward me, and I squint my eyes from the sharpness.

“Do you mind? Where would I even go?” I snap, and he obliges, turning off the flashlight, but staying put. As I crouch down to pee, my pulse quickens. This is my only chance, isn't it? To escape, to get away from him. I can't let him take me to that cabin. What if he tires of me and then I’m just stuck there being ignored for the rest of my life?

I don’t have any panties to pull up, so as soon as I’m finished, I take off. I don't look back as I run through the trees. My heart pounds in my chest, and my footsteps feel like they echo through the quiet night. I zigzag through the woods, hoping to throw him off my trail. Branches scratch at my face, and thorns bite into my legs, but I can't afford to stop. I think maybe he’ll have a harder time navigating because he’s so much bigger, but it's not long before I hear him closing in, his footfalls steady and unwavering. Panic sets in as I glance over my shoulder, glimpsing his

determined form hot on my heels. I trip over what I realize is a tombstone. When I look around, I see several more and realize that I've trespassed into a private cemetery in the woods. I have no idea whose property we're on, but we're definitely a good bit away from the truck now. He’s faster, stronger, and despite my best efforts, he catches up to me. With a speed that surprises me, he tackles me to the ground, his body pressing me into the earth. I squirm and struggle, but his grip is unrelenting, his hold like a vise that refuses to yield. The woods are silent except for our ragged breaths, and the moon casts eerie shadows around us. It's just me, him, and the suffocating darkness of what we’ve become. The fallen leaves rustle under our entwined bodies. I can feel the cool ground beneath me, the earthy scent of the forest filling my senses. Dad’s grip on my wrists is strong, and he holds me down with a force that sends shivers through me.

"You can't just run away from me, Olivia," he says, his voice low and intense, and I’m probably imagining it, but if I had to guess, there’s a twinge of hurt and sadness lacing his tone, too. “I need to keep you safe,” he whispers the words, and I hate how comforting the sound is. I wish he could talk to me like this always.

No. He doesn’t care about how safe you weren’t without him.

I stare up at him, my breaths coming fast and shallow. "Safe?" I retort, my tone dripping with sass. "You didn't seem too concerned about my safety when you sent me off to school and then went to hide in the wilderness like a coward." I know I’m provoking him, but it doesn’t stop me. He’s either going to let me go or break me completely because I won’t settle for anything else.

His jaw tightens, and anger flashes in his eyes. But I can see in those stormy depths that my words have struck a nerve. He knows they hold a painful truth. He gets it. He knows he broke my heart, and it’s still broken because he never came back to fix it.

"I didn't want to hurt you," he admits, his voice softer now. "That's why I sent you away."

My gaze narrows, my frustration bubbling to the surface. "That’s a load."

He shifts his weight on top of me, his grip loosening slightly. He flips me over but doesn’t lessen the hold he has on me. “On your hands and knees, doll.” His voice is harder, more stern, and the tone sends jolts of pleasure from my nipples, down my belly, and directly to my clit.

“What are you doing?” I don’t have a choice because he pulls me up, so I’m on all fours. The broken twigs, pieces of rock, and rough leaves scrape my bare knees. I can feel the anger radiating off of him again. I know it can’t be the fact that I’m blaming him for sending me away because he’s acknowledged as much.

“I’m doing what you wanted me to do with every bratty voicemail you left on my phone,” he says tersely, and it all happens so fast. He flips up the skirt I’m wearing, and the cool night air feels like it burns against my skin. I try to jerk away from him, but his warm palm comes down heavy, slapping my left ass cheek. “No panties? This certainly wasn’t for my benefit. Who did you think you were going to see after you stole my truck?” I cry out, unable to answer him through the pain because of the sting that sizzles into an aching burn. I anticipate that he’s going to do the same on the right, but instead, he slaps the same exact spot three more times. Pain mingles with pleasure, and I hate the fact that I’m so wet. My face burns with embarrassment when I hear him let out a low, guttural curse and I realize that he notices, too.

“You’ve been waiting for this spanking for a long time, haven’t you, doll?” He murmurs so low that if I didn’t hear the pet name, I’d think he was talking to himself. He lifts his free hand from my back and uses it to pull my ass cheeks apart to look at my wet pussy. I don’t try to get away from him because I’m too stunned, too winded, or maybe I’m hoping he’ll continue the punishment that right now feels like anything but that.

"I saw you talking to Frank," he says, and his tone becomes accusatory as he sinks two fingers roughly inside my pussy. “You didn't look like you missed me very much, then. Fuck, you’re tight, doll.” He pulls his fingers all the way out, only to shove them back in, his other hand coming down hard on my ass cheek. I arch up from the pain, but I can’t believe what I’m hearing. Rage only a Hillcrest could understand runs through my entire body as I wrench my head to the side to glare at him. Is he serious? After the nights of flirting, the almost kisses, and then the best and only kiss of my life, he dumped me off at school and didn’t even hang around to watch over me. He left me like trash he didn’t have a use for anymore, and he has the nerve to punish me over a guy who wouldn’t have had a chance to get close to me if my dad had been there to stop him.

I can't help but scoff at the absurdity of his jealousy. "Frank? You're jealous of FRANK? I still can’t believe you killed him for following me

around." My laugh is bitter, devoid of humor. "I had to deal with Frank pawing at me all semester, practically stalking me until I felt scared. And where were you, Daddy? Nowhere to be found. Landon is so obsessed with Sophia that he never noticed, and Ethan had already taken Isabella back to the cabin. I was on my own, fending for myself." I smirk as an idea pops into my head. “For all you know, he was fucking me from the moment you dropped me off.”

My sassy tone is diminished, but I will myself not to cry. Dad’s anger simmers, and for a moment, I fear his reaction. But then, without a word, he’s wrenching my legs apart. I hear his zipper slide down and before I can move, he’s pushing the head of his dick against my wet opening. He leans down, gripping my hair in one hand while he grunts out against my ear, “I’m going to fuck your little pussy so good that another man will never enter that pretty little mind of yours.”

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GRANT

My doll doesn't make a sound as I slam inside of her for the first time, but I know it hurts her by the way her whole body tenses up, and the air whooshes out of her lungs. I hadn't expected her to be a virgin with the way she's been talking, setting the tone that she's been with other men trying to forget me over the last few months. I bury my cock deep inside her because I'm not a good enough man to pull out and ask her if she's okay. I know she's not. She hates me, she doesn't trust me, and still, I can't fight the urge to take this from her.

I grip her hips, flexing mine up against her ass, trying to push further inside her when I know it's not physically possible. I need this. I've needed this for so long. "Fuck, you're so tight for me." I lower my body on top of her, letting go of her hair so I can brace myself on my forearms so I don't crush her to the ground. "I need to fuck you, doll. I need to come inside your pussy. Fill you up until I'm dripping down your thighs." I grunt out the words as I start moving my hips. "I know you hate me. Take it out on me now. Fight me, doll. Get it all out," I encourage her because I need her to be sassy right now. I need her to push my buttons.

"Get off of me!" she yells, but it only spurs me on. Her cry of pain when I slam inside her again even rougher than the first time should make me feel guilty, but it doesn't. It makes my cock harder. It makes my hips piston against her plump ass. I should make her come before I finish, but I can't wait. I keep thrusting like it's my first time until I finally explode, pushing inside her with two more long strokes as my come fills her tight hole. I collapse on top of my doll, breathing heavily, trying to get as close to her as

I possibly can. I slide my arm under her, cupping her cheek in my hand. I cringe when I realize that she has dirt caked on the side of her beautiful face. My heart clenches in my chest because the clarity of my orgasm provides this haunting realization. She deserves so much more than being fucked in the dirt roughly without her pleasure being the focus. If she hated me before, she definitely will want nothing to do with me now. She's slack under me, all the fight in her gone, and that concerns me the most.

I kiss the side of her face that wasn't forced into the dirt and try to think of what I can possibly say to her. Nothing. There is nothing. I push up off of her and pull her to her feet. When I pick her up and cradle her carefully against my chest, I don't even bother tucking my still semi-hard cock back into my jeans. I'm not finished with her yet, but I need to get her back to the truck.

I open the door and set her inside the passenger seat, and I can't meet her eyes. I should be profusely apologizing, but I have no idea where to even start. Instead, I push her skirt up and swipe my come that is leaking down her thigh and press it up inside her pussy. She gasps, and in the light of the truck, I see her blood mixing with my come, and it's the fucking hottest thing I've ever seen in my entire life. My dick twitches to life, and I have to silently berate myself because I need to make this time about her. I should wait until we get back to the cabin, but that isn't an option. The thought of not being inside her again for the rest of the ride home is fucking unbearable. I take my t-shirt off and flip it inside out, using a part of it that has no blood from Frank or dirt from when I just fucked her, and I brush her face clean, and it doesn't escape me that her eyes are glassy, but she's too stubborn to cry.

"Can we just leave? I'm fine," she says, pushing my hand away, but she won't meet my eyes. I don't fucking blame her, but I'm not going to let it slide.

"Look at me," I implore her, but she turns her head despite the fact that she doesn't pull away from me. I lean into her, pressing my face against her neck and pulling her into me. "I am so sorry," I tell her honestly, kissing her skin. Fuck, she's perfect.

"Sorry for what?" she asks me, pushing me away, and I only let her because our eyes finally meet, and it feels like I'm being stabbed in the heart.

“For leaving you,” I tell her. “I’m sorry I didn’t keep you by my side and take what I wanted, what I fucking needed. I’m sorry I left you alone.” I think maybe she feels how true my words are when her bottom lip trembles, but I realize then how cold it is, and she’s sitting on the truck seat, and I’ve still got the door open. “Scoot over,” I tell her because I need to get this all out before I fuck things up even more. To my surprise, she complies, letting me get inside and shut the door. I reach across her and turn the key, causing the heat to pour out into the cab of the truck. I don’t give her a minute to think before I’m pulling her on my lap and smoothing her hair away from her face.

My doll lets out a gasp when she feels my rock-hard cock brush against her soft inner thigh, and I let my head fall back at the sensation. “I’m not finished groveling, baby, but I need to be inside you so I can concentrate,” I tell her, and I love the way her eyes widen at my words. “My come is dripping out of you, and I need to know that it’s still inside, filling you up,” I try to explain, but there are no words. I have this primal urge to keep her full.

“Okay,” she whispers, and it’s nothing like the sassy mouth she’s had since we’ve been reunited. I lift her up and slide her down on my cock, fully sheathing myself within her. My head falls forward so I can gently tilt her head back and press kisses to her neck.

“You’re such a good girl for me, Olivia. My little doll made just for me,” I praise her, meaning every word, but I don’t move inside her. I need to give her sore, well-fucked pussy time to adjust, and I’m enjoying just feeling the slight weight of her on my lap, her warm come-filled pussy gripping my cock like it was made to do just that.

She tries to look away from me, but I gently pull her lips to mine, kissing her with the intensity and love that I’ve held back all this time. My cock jerks inside her, and she moans against my lips. She blinks at me through tears, seemingly stunned by the openness I’m showing her. "I'll never leave you alone again," I promise her, my voice unwavering. "I'll swear on everything that I love. You're mine now, and we'll never be apart. I love you, Olivia, in a way that I shouldn’t, but it’s so intense that if I can’t keep you, you might as well take me back to that graveyard in the woods and leave me to die."

She’s too stunned to say anything, but I can see the realization in her eyes. She studies my face, cupping my jaw in her small hands and then

moving to brush my hair back from my forehead. “I love you,” she whispers, leaning forward to brush her lips against mine, her hips moving with the motion. She moans softly at the feeling of my cock moving inside her. I slide my hands up her thighs to hold onto her hips. I keep myself fully seated inside her, but I rock her gently, wanting this time to be about nothing but making her come.

“That’s it, show Daddy how much you love me,” I beg her, moving one of my hands in between us to find her clit. As soon as my fingers brush against her bundle of nerves, it’s like her entire body lights up for me. She moves on her own now, using my cock to pleasure her tight pussy. I move my free hand up to pull her blazer off and push her little t-shirt up over her pert tits. I lean down and take one of her nipples in my mouth, sucking, licking, and biting, and she starts moving faster up and down on my cock.

“Daddy,” she cries out, and I know she’s close to coming undone, and when she calls me that it makes my cock jerk, threatening to finish again too soon. I am her Daddy. Her protector, the only man she’ll ever experience in this way. I want to feel her wet center pulsate around my dick. I want her to milk me until I spill myself inside her for a second time. She should always be full of my come.

“I need you to come for me,” I tell her, and my voice sounds strangled, unhinged. “Rub your clit for me, doll,” I tell her when both of my hands move to her hips. She obeys my command immediately, and that just makes me fuck my hips up against her more rapidly. “You’re a good fucking girl,” I tell her before my lips crash against hers. She arches her back, and I feel the tremors moving through her entire body as she comes on my cock. I’m stretching her pussy, and I’m certain that my fingertips are going to be visible on her hips tomorrow. I’m holding her to me so tightly because I’m so fucking scared that this is all a dream and when I wake up, she’ll be gone, and I’ll be alone in that fucking cabin, missing the warmth of her body.

I follow her shortly after, shooting jet after jet of come inside her, and even after I’m fully spent and my head rolls forward to rest on her shoulder, my cock still jerks inside her, trying to get deeper. When she shifts, I pull her to me, my arms locking around her because there’s no way in hell I’m ready to let this feeling end. If I could drive us home like this with her still on my lap, I would. “I love you so much, and I’m so fucking sorry for—” I

start, still panting from the exertion of fucking all of my pain, anger, and desperation into her small body.

“I know you are,” she tells me, wrapping her arms around my neck and sagging against me in exhaustion. I know some of her state is due to the way I’ve absolutely ravaged her twice in such a short span of time, but it isn’t lost on me how she rests against me. I have a feeling she hasn’t felt this safe since I dropped her off at Hillcrest, and that tears me up inside.

“I’ll spend the rest of my life making the last three months up to you.” I kiss her softly, tugging her head back gently because I want to look into her eyes.

“I know that too,” she says softly, a smile spreading across her perfectly plump lips. “I don’t want to let you go,” she says, nuzzling into me, and I let her because I feel the same. We have quite a drive left tonight, but I’ll worry about that later. Right now, this girl in my arms is the only thing I care about.

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GRANT

The soft, golden hues of dawn filter through the wooden blinds, casting warm ribbons of light across the rustic bedroom I built with my doll in mind. The scent of pine and fresh air permeates the space, giving it an earthy, comforting aroma. The bed creaks as I shift, pulling her tighter to my chest. I’m not sure how long we slept after we got home and showered together, but I do know that I’ve come inside her more times than I can count while she slept in my arms. She stirs and I can already feel my cock hardening, the tip pushing further inside her and keeping the warm liquid deep inside her where it belongs.

Olivia’s golden hair is splayed across the pillows like a halo. Her skin, illuminated by the soft morning light, is as soft as it looks. I can't help but lean down and press a tender kiss to her neck, my lips tracing a path along her collarbone. I have had at least one part of her body touching mine since we walked through the front door of the cabin, and I suspect it’s going to be a very long time before I allow her to be more than an inch or two away from me.

"I love you," I murmur, my voice a mere breath against her skin. I want to say more, but the words don’t come. My mind is like mush, trying to process that she’s finally here with me. I realize in this moment all the turmoil that I caused for both of us over the last three months would have vanished if I had just brought her here with me from the very beginning.

My doll sighs contentedly, her fingers threading through my hair as she arches her neck to grant me better access. "I love you too, Daddy," she whispers, her voice filled with a warmth that matches the feeling in my

chest. "I feel like I’ve been dragged by a truck," she adds with a soft chuckle. My feelings are so conflicted by what she says. I love the fact that her body is mine to do with as I please, but guilt swings through my chest at the memory of how roughly I took her the first time.

I pause for a moment, my lips lingering on her skin, before I look up to meet her gaze. I reply, my voice tinged with all of the devotion I feel for her. The anger from yesterday fully dissipated. "I'll never let you go again," I tell her, brushing her hair away from her face. The words come out rough, feral almost, but she hangs on every one, seemingly comforted by my declaration.

My fingers trace patterns along her delicate arm, following the curve of her shoulder as I pull her closer. Olivia's eyes meet mine, and there's a vulnerability there that tugs at my heartstrings. She's been through so much, endured my absence and the darkness that threatened to consume her. But now, here in this cabin, we have a chance to rewrite our story, to heal and rediscover the bond between us that is stronger than anything I’ve ever witnessed in my life. I feel her heartbeat against my chest, a steady rhythm that soothes me in a way nothing else ever has. Her fingers dance lightly over my skin, and I can tell she's in her head by the way her fingers stop momentarily and then start once again. I need to let her do this, to process what happened, to get angry at me if she needs to. “It’s okay if you’re unsure. If you’re still mad at me. We’ve got the rest of our lives to figure it out, but I’m going to lay this all out here right now. I wasn’t saying it just to say it when I said I’ll never let you go,” I tell her, pulling her closer to me, needing to feel her crushed against me because I don’t know what the fuck I’ll do if she really did want to leave. “You’re mine and I’ll cherish you until my last breath in this world and find you in the next.”

"I was so angry when you left me," she admits, her voice soft and trembling. “Not really. I was sad mostly, but there was anger, too.” I hold my breath, waiting for what she might say. “I'm so glad you came back to find me. I was miserable without you.”

I lean down to capture her lips in a tender kiss, my hands cradling her face because she is the most precious thing in the world to me. I’ve never been great at expressing myself, but I try to let her feel everything that is welling up inside me for her. She’s everything to me. My doll that I crave more than anything, my daughter who I love with every breath that leaves my body. She's the beating heart of my existence, the missing piece that

makes me whole. I’m still inside her while we lie there, bodies intertwined, and I want this to be how it always is. I want to be inside her every single chance I get.

"Look at me," I begin, my voice low, demanding, but filled with all the sincerity I feel in this moment, "I want you to know that I belong to you, heart, mind, body, and soul. I've never belonged to anyone else in my life." The words escape my lips like a long-held secret finally set free. "I've never felt as complete, but I do now."

Olivia shifts, her eyes locked onto mine, a hint of some emotion I’ve never seen before gleaming in those beautiful orbs. Her fingers trail lightly along my chest as she listens, every touch leaving a gentle fire in its wake.

"We will never be apart," I continue, my voice unwavering. "And if you leave this earth before me, I’ll follow you." The depth of my commitment to her is something I've never shared with anyone before. It's a promise etched into my soul.

Olivia's breath hitches, her eyes glistening with unshed tears. She buries her face in the crook of my neck and leaves a tender kiss on my cheek, and it doesn’t escape me how she brushes her cheek against the stubble peppering my face. I’ll never be clean-shaven again if that’s what my doll wants. "I love it when you say things like that," she whispers softly.

A wry smile tugs at my lips as I pull back slightly to look at her. "You didn't think I could be such a softie, huh?" I tease, my tough exterior giving way to the truth she already knows.

She chuckles, the sound like music to my ears. "I guess I didn't," she admits. "You always act like this gruff, tough guy." I can't deny the truth in her words, and I briefly scowl at the notion that she thinks I’m anything but those things. Yet, deep down, I know she's right. Around her, I'm far from invulnerable. I melt for her, every time. And when I tried to fight it, I made us both hurt worse than I could have ever imagined. My chest tightens with the memory of our separation, the torment of those days without her. I hate myself for sending her back to school, for allowing her to slip away from me. I was incomplete, a jigsaw missing its most vital piece. I try my best to bury those thoughts, focusing on the present moment. I can't bear to dwell on the past when my doll is here, right now, in my arms.

I pull her closer to me, nestling my face into the crook of her neck, breathing in her sweet, familiar scent, like vanilla and cinnamon. I'm startled when she gently tells me to stop. I pull back and look at her

quizzically. She smiles softly, her fingers caressing my cheek. "I can tell where your mind is, Daddy," she says, her voice full of love and understanding. "But we need to put it behind us. Let's pretend like we were never separated." My heart swells with gratitude for this incredible woman. I press my lips against hers, a gentle affirmation of my unwavering commitment. "It'll never happen again," I promise, my voice a solemn vow.

She giggles, rubbing her palm over my bare chest. “I know it won’t. I won’t let it. You can drag me back to Hillcrest, but I’ll cause such a scene you’ll have no choice but to take me home,” she whispers teasingly, and I glower at her because I know what she’s doing. She’s trying to get me riled up enough at the thought of her disobeying me that I flip her under me and fuck her as roughly as I want to right now. She’s too tender and sore for that, and I’ll always put her first. Instead of holding her down and pounding into her wet cunt, I pull my cock out of her. She whines in protest, and that makes me smile.

With a newfound sense of purpose, I take her hand and help her to her feet. "Come with me," I say, guiding her toward a door at the back of the cabin. Ethan and Isabella are over at the site where we’re building a cabin for them to live in already, so I don’t have to worry about them interrupting.

“I need clothes—” she starts, but I silence her with a kiss. She reaches down to stop the come dripping out of her tight opening and down the inside of her thigh.

“Leave it. I want to see what I’ve done to you.” I wrap my hand around her throat gently, pulling her to stand up on her tiptoes to give me the kiss that I want. “Ethan and Isabella are over at their cabin site,” I whisper, kissing her roughly again. “But even if they weren’t, I don’t mind if they see what I’ve done to you. I want everyone to know I’ve claimed you, that you’re mine.” I feel her shiver, and I see the glint of excitement in her eyes that she likes this possessive, dominant side of myself that I’m showing her.

My doll follows me without protest, her small hand wrapped in my much larger one. I lead her out onto the front porch of our cabin, and her eyes widen with surprise.

Before her stands the beautiful, handcrafted rocking chair I was working on the night we first kissed. Its smooth wooden surface gleams in the bright morning sunlight.

I turn to Olivia, my heart pounding with all the love I have for her. "I took far too long, but I promise you I thought of you—of us—every single

moment we were apart," I confess, my voice barely above a whisper. "Even though that night is tainted with bad memories, I wanted you to have something special, something to remind you of our first kiss, the night that unraveled everything I'd been holding back." Her eyes glisten with unshed tears as she gazes at the rocking chair, and for a moment, it feels like the world outside has ceased to exist.

She wraps her arms around me. "It's perfect," she tells me before she jumps in my arms, wrapping her legs around my hips, and crashing her lips to mine as I carry her over to the rocking chair and let her slide down to place her feet on the floor. I take a seat, and she's quick to climb on my lap, wrapping her arms around my neck and nuzzling against me.

This moment is so much better than I imagined it would be, so I tell her,"Yes," I agree. "Perfect, just like my little doll."

Epilogue - Olivia

The scent of wood smoke hangs in the atmosphere, mingling with the earthy aroma of fallen leaves, and I feel like I've belonged here in this cabin my entire life. Really, I have. This was meant for me, for Dad, for our whole family. I look out the window and see Ethan and Dad arguing while they fiddle with the huge metal trough that Isabella insisted they turn into a hot tub. It only took a day trip into town for parts and a week of Dad blaming Ethan for everything that went wrong and Ethan cackling every time they'd realize they forgot a step before it started looking like the real deal. Fall has always been my favorite season, and now, here with Dad and at least two of my siblings, it's even more enchanting. I can't wait for winter to arrive, though, because Dad promised to skate with me on the frozen pond, and we haven't skated together since I was small.

Isabella pops into the room I share with Dad. I notice right away that she's wearing a tiny pink bikini just before tossing a blue one to me. I raise an eyebrow at how little fabric there is to it, but she just grins mischievously. Things are much more relaxed here than in the home we grew up in. Mom isn't around to yell at us to cover up, and we're all adults, so the tone is different, I suppose. Isabella is not shy about showing her body, and Ethan seems to love the fact that she isn't. I lost count of how many places I've seen them have sex around the cabin and the property. They're perfect for one another and it shows. Isabella tries to push me out of my comfort zone, but eating breakfast with everyone in just one of Dad's shirts has been as scandalous as it's been for me.

"Where did you get these?" I ask, holding up the bikini.

Her eyes sparkle as she replies, “I bought them at that boutique in town when Dad was threatening to leave Ethan stranded if he didn’t stop fucking around in the hardware store, and you were playing referee.” She laughs when I wince because I really wasn’t sure if Dad was going to pull over and toss Ethan off a cliff that day. He’s such a brat when he wants to be. “Dad and Ethan got the hot tub installed and working. I felt the water, and it’s super warm. Come on, let’s get out there before Dad drowns Ethan for talking shit.”

Her mention of Ethan’s shit-talking makes a grin spread across my face as I recall the promise Dad made to me about the pond. Isabella notices my smile and asks what I'm so happy about. "Dad promised me that he'll skate with me on the pond once it's frozen," I say.

Isabella shakes her head playfully. "Count me out on that one," she says. “The idea of skating on ice that might not be all the way frozen terrifies me. No, thank you.”

I chuckle, understanding her apprehension. "No worries," I reply. "Dad said he'll make Ethan run across it first to check if it's safe."

Both of us laugh at the mental image of our broody older brother falling through ice and Dad cursing as he has to pull him to safety. I can't help but roll my eyes. “We would never hear the end of it.”

I notice that Isabella has another bikini in her other hand when she sets it down on my dresser. She must see that it’s caught my eye. "I was holding out hope that Sophia and Landon would be here before winter," she says somberly, and I feel her sentiment. I miss Sophia and even Landon’s grouchy ass, too. She turns to fix her hair into a high ponytail while I change into the blue bikini.

As I adjust the skimpy garment, I can't help but blush at the thought of Dad's reaction. Isabella checks herself out in the mirror and then looks at me when I say, "They’ll come when they’re ready, I suppose." I laugh when Isabella pulls a face, making it clear that everything should be on her time.

We link arms and make our way out of the bedroom, through the living room, and onto the back deck. There, we find Dad and Ethan, each with a can of beer in their hand, and it’s clear that Ethan is winding Dad up about everything he did wrong with the hot tub construction.

She nods, her expression thoughtful. “We need Landon here as a buffer between those two. He’s grouchy, but he doesn’t get Dad worked up.”

“Maybe the curse didn’t affect him the same way. You know how he is. Landon can be pretty stubborn when he wants to be.”

"All the men in our family are stubborn," Isabella replies, and as if on cue, both Dad and Ethan grumble. “And trust me, from what I saw the night Ethan came and got me from Hillcrest, the curse is alive and well in Landon.” Her mischievous grin makes me want to ask her what she saw because it had to be something more than Landon’s usual protective bullshit where he bosses Sophia around all the time, but I’m interrupted by Ethan.

"I heard that," Ethan complains, but his tone holds no bite as his eyes take in Isabella’s form.

Isabella and I laugh as we reach the hot tub, the bubbling water inviting us in. Dad slips in next to me, wrapping his arms around me and pulling me close and up onto his lap. "I love that bikini," he murmurs, his lips grazing my ear. He’s rock-hard already, and excitement buzzes through me. I wonder if this will be the first time he fucks me in front of Isabella and Ethan, and I surprise myself because I don’t hate the idea.

I don’t hate it at all.

The bubbling water of the hot tub feels so good as its warmth seeps into my skin as I lean back against Dad’s solid chest. His arms encircle me, pulling me closer, and I sigh in contentment, feeling the steady rhythm of his heart against my back. It's been a month since we retreated here, a month of rediscovering each other, healing old wounds, and creating new connections. Isabella rests on the edge of the deck, her eyes locked onto mine, her hand reaching out to grasp mine. The bond between us has never been stronger, and in this moment, we share secrets and thoughts that only twins can understand.

“What did you see between Landon and Sophia?” I ask her, and I have to bite my bottom lip because Dad grabs my hips roughly, grinding my ass against his hard cock. Even through his board shorts and my bikini bottoms, it feels like he’s hard enough to poke right through just to get inside me.

Isabella looks back at Ethan, and he nods, apparently giving her the go-ahead to tell me. “We stopped by her room before we left to come here, and she was passed out asleep, and Landon was jerking off into a pair of her panties,” she says it so easily, and I glance at Ethan who only nods to confirm what she’s said. He kneels behind Isabella, his strong hands gently massaging lotion into her back. Isabella lets out a contented sigh before she continues. “That’s how he’s holding out so long. He was so worked up that

I taunted him into going down on her while she was sleeping, but he didn’t snap and claim her.” She frowns like she really would have liked to see that. I must look shocked because she elaborates, “I suspect he’s getting his urges out while she’s asleep from those pills she takes. It won’t last forever, though. Eventually, he’ll need more, and he’ll bring her here.”

I steal a glance at Dad, his dark eyes filled with a depth of emotion that still takes my breath away. He nuzzles my neck, placing soft kisses along my shoulder, and I can't help but shiver in delight. Despite the month that has passed, his desire for me remains as strong and unyielding as ever. “Sophia will be fine. She belongs to Landon, and it’s up to them to figure it out,” Dad warns, probably sensing that I’m about to say that he shouldn’t be doing that to Sophia while she’s not awake to participate.

All thoughts of Sophia and Landon fly out of my brain when Dad reaches between my legs to push my bikini bottoms out of the way, his fingers finding my clit. I love the way his laugh rumbles in his strong chest, and his other hand comes up to rub over my breast, still covered by my bikini top.

“Something tells me Ethan and Isabella won’t mind,” he murmurs against my ear. I whine when he pulls his fingers away from my clit. He slaps my thigh hard, contributing to the influx of wetness between my legs that has nothing to do with the hot tub. He nudges me to lift up, and I look over at my siblings as I feel him shifting around under me as I watch Ethan rub lotion on Isabella’s legs and up over her ass cheeks. He grins at me as he roughly pulls her bottoms down over her ass, making the flesh bounce with the movement. I never thought of myself as a voyeur, but the look of pure bliss on her face when he leans down and kisses her lower back is something I’ll never forget. Ethan pushes her to get up on her hands and knees just as I feel the head of Dad’s cock brushing against my pussy.

“Does my doll like watching her sister get fucked?” Dad huskily asks me as he pulls down on my hips hard, fulling seating his cock inside me with such force that I arch back against his chest. This grabs Isabella’s attention and Ethan smirks, pulling his hard cock out of his board shorts and lining himself up against Isabella’s ass. She smiles at me before her eyes roll shut when he slams inside her, his fingers finding her pink hair.

Dad rubs his hands up my stomach, finding my nipples and pinching them roughly. “Answer me while you ride my cock, doll,” he demands, and I obey him.

“Yes,” I whimper out as he slams his hips upward so hard, making the water splash around us and my tits bounce in his hold.

“Watch your brother fill your sister’s cunt,” he tells me, rolling my nipples and thrusting harder. I can feel that he’s ferally chasing his own release, so turned on by the feel of my tight pussy enveloping him and the sight of Ethan holding Isabella down as he fucks inside her with such force that I’m certain she’s going to have marks on her hands and knees from the sheer force.

Dad bites my shoulder as one of his hands travels back down to my clit. I know what he wants.

“Do you want me to come on your dick, Daddy?” I ask breathlessly, my eyes rolling up. I can no longer see what's happening between Isabella and Ethan. I'm now totally focused on the way my dad is fucking me. He has this way of controlling every one of my nerve endings, making it so I can focus on nothing other than the way he feels.

He doesn’t answer me. Instead, he grunts, biting my neck and flicking his fingers against my clit with more pressure. He hasn't told me that he likes when I call him Daddy, but the way he reacts when the word leaves my mouth is all I need to know. I love how in control he is, and all it takes is for me to utter the word, and the man is losing his mind, feral for me. I throw my head back as I fall over the edge, my pussy convulsing and squeezing his cock.

“That’s my doll,” he grunts, grabbing my hips and pulling me down as he slams up inside me, pushing deeper than he ever has before. “Fuck,” he growls, gripping my hair and pressing his mouth against my neck, his tongue flicking out to lap at the marks he left from where he bit me. When I shift, he pulls me back against him, clearly not ready to separate from my warmth. He drops his head to my shoulder and places a kiss there, letting me know how much he savors having me here with him.

Second Epilogue - Grant

The middle of winter has draped our cabin and the surrounding landscape in a serene, snowy wonderland. The pond on our land now rests beneath a thick sheet of ice. I’d much rather be inside the warm cabin right now fucking my wife full of come, but a promise is a promise. Olivia isn’t legally my wife, but I did get her a ring and ask her to be mine forever. We’ll live out here as husband and wife, and that’s all that matters to me. I didn’t want her to feel like she was missing out on anything by not having a

wedding like she would if things were different, if she hadn’t chosen to be with me. The thought alone makes my body jerk with anger because thinking of my doll with another man is something that still makes me bristle.

Breaking my inner rage over something that will never happen, my oldest son shoots me a glare that could melt even the coldest of winters as he stands at the edge of the frozen pond. On the opposite side, Olivia and Isabella share a conspiratorial giggle at his expense. There are two things Isabella loves in this life. Ethan and irritating Ethan.

With a playful grin, I can't resist teasing him. "You're not scared, are you?"

Ethan grumbles back in response, "You're the renowned coach of Hillcrest University. Shouldn't you be the one checking out the pond instead of sending me?"

Laughter bubbles up within me as I watch Ethan gingerly step onto the ice like he wasn’t a fucking powerhouse in the rink back at Hillcrest before his injury. It doesn't take long for his booted feet to betray him, and he lands on his backside with a comical thud. I told him he should put skates on, but he insisted that he'd be fine in his boots, but now probably isn't the time to bring that up. Isabella's laughter rings through the brisk winter air, clearly reveling in the sight of her typically composed other half in such a precarious position.

"Weren't you the captain of your hockey team in college?" Isabella playfully taunts, her eyes sparkling with mischief. Ethan's subsequent falls do nothing to diminish her glee, and she thoroughly enjoys her playful revenge. The pond is frozen solid, but making Ethan test it anyway feels like payback for all the hot tub bullshit.

Ethan snaps, "You're going to pay for that."

Isabella, still grinning like a Cheshire cat, tosses a taunting retort back at him. "You'll have to catch me first." With those words, she sprints away through the snow-covered field, her laughter echoing in the crisp winter air as she makes her way back to their cabin. Ethan, undeterred by his slips and tumbles, gives chase, his determination clear in every stride. Her backside is going to be raw tomorrow, but I suspect she wants it that way. I know he will always look after her, just as I will always protect Olivia.

The snow continues to fall gently around my doll and me, transforming our little part of the world into a pristine winter wonderland. As Ethan

disappears into the distance, Olivia and I share a quiet laugh, basking in the snowy tranquility of the winter's day. She places her hand on my chest, and as if on cue, delicate snowflakes begin to drift down around us. Olivia’s smile is radiant as she gently brushes the snowflakes from my jacket, her touch as light as the falling snow. Cupping her face in my hands, I can't help but be entranced by the sheer beauty that stands before me. "You look absolutely stunning. I still can’t believe you’re mine," I murmur, my voice soft, lost in the depth of her captivating gaze.

Our laughter mingles with the soft patter of snowflakes as we hear Isabella's spirited laughing screams and Ethan's grunts of determination, and it’s hilarious to me that he still hasn’t caught her. I chuckle and comment on Ethan's grumpiness, trying to keep a straight face when I make sure to note that I'm not sure where he gets it from. Olivia snorts with laughter, a sound that never fails to warm my heart. She teases me, claiming that both Ethan and Landon are nothing more than carbon copies of their father, and I'm wholly to blame for their often bad attitudes. Feigning annoyance, I gather her in my arms and twirl her around before kneeling down by the pond. I tenderly tighten the laces of her skates, a task I've relished since the first day she ventured onto the ice. She uses my shoulders for balance as I secure her skates in place. When the task is complete, I sit on the bench, which I lovingly crafted just for her, by the frozen pond.

Olivia gracefully kneels before me, her fingers deftly working on my own skates. I can't resist running my fingers through her hair, marveling at the softness of it, and gazing at her with unabashed adoration. Our quiet moment by the frozen pond is an opportunity to speak the words that have been residing in our hearts. "Olivia," I begin, my voice steady, "I promise you, I'll never stop trying to make up for the time we were apart."

Her eyes meet mine, filled with unwavering affection. She replies, "It’s forgotten. I don’t even want to remember anything before this cabin, before this life with you."

I smile tenderly, my heart swelling with love for this remarkable woman. "There was never anything before this, before you," I assure her. As we set off to skate around the frozen pond, we share an embrace, and it feels like time is standing still.

Just as we lose ourselves in the beauty of the moment, the distant headlights of a large truck pierce through the snowy trees. Olivia's eyes catch the glimmer of those lights, and I pull her close, but relax when I

realize that it’s Landon's truck. I don’t want to give up the time I’m spending with my doll, but Olivia and I glide to a graceful halt on the frozen pond as we spot Landon's clearly distressed figure get out of the driver’s side door. There's something palpably wrong. Landon's disheveled appearance is striking, his hair a mess, and I can even see the dark circles etched beneath his eyes.

"We should go see what's happening," Olivia says quickly, concern knitting her brows. But I pull her close to my side, my intuition guiding me. "Let's wait and see what he's doing," I suggest quietly. "There are only a couple of reasons he'd show up here like this."

Olivia's eyes widen in realization. “Do you think he left her at Hillcrest? She’ll be all alone,” she says hesitantly.

I kiss the top of her head gingerly, my eyes fixed on Landon. "I don’t know," I murmur softly. “He may think it’s for her own good.”

"Remember how I was when I came to get you at school?" I remind Olivia, my voice heavy with the memories of my own desperation. “I was absolutely unhinged. Nothing could have calmed me down until I was with you. He has to reach that breaking point and we can’t intervene.”

As those words hang in the frosty air, Olivia clings to me. We watch as Ethan emerges from their cabin, Isabella trailing behind. Their words are inaudible from this distance, but Isabella's worried expression is enough for me to realize that it might not be as simple as I thought.

"What if something happened to Sophia?" Olivia asks, her voice filled with concern as we continue to watch the scene unfold.

I squeeze her hand, reassuring her. "If Sophia's hurt, it had to be something Landon did because he would never have let anyone get close enough to her to do her any harm."

With that, I tug on her hand and lead her over to the bench where we swap our skates out for our snow boots. It’s not long before we’re making our way up the snowy field toward Landon's truck. As we approach, Landon is pacing frantically, his anxious energy practically tangible. I confront him, my voice taut with worry. "What did you do to her?"

Landon's eyes, tired and glassy, meet mine. But it's Ethan who responds, his voice filled with frustration. "He didn't listen to me. I told him the longer he held out, the more force he'd take her with."

My gaze drifts back to Landon, and I utter a low warning, "Don't just stand there. Bring her inside the house."

Ethan tries to step forward, offering to retrieve Sophia himself. But Landon's temper flares, and he lunges at his brother, shoving him hard enough to send him sprawling in the snow.

As the two of them engage in a scuffle, I step in between, pulling them apart. Landon's eyes are wild, his voice hoarse when he declares, "No one touches her but me. NO ONE!"

My gaze narrows, but I don't falter. Instead, I focus on Sophia, who's nestled carefully in the passenger seat of Landon’s truck. She appears fragile, with pale skin and dark bruises on her neck, hidden beneath her coat. Her vacant eyes seem lost in the distance, as if she's retreated to another world.

With a heavy heart, I glance back at Landon, my voice softening. "Bring her inside my cabin, Landon," I instruct gently, pointing toward my home. “There's a room prepared for the two of you, a place for you both when you finally decided to come live with us. I think you should let her have some space.”

Landon's eyes hold a brief moment of vulnerability before hardening again. "I won't be sleeping without her," he insists, his voice unwavering.

As Landon disappears inside the cabin, cradling Sophia with the utmost care, I feel Olivia's hand tremble in mine. She searches my eyes for reassurance, her concern etched on her face.

"It'll be okay, baby," I say softly, pulling her closer. "Go help Isabella check on Sophia. Ethan and I need to have a chat with Landon."

Once Olivia is safely inside with her sisters, I stand in the snow-covered landscape and peer out at the vast wilderness, my thoughts filled with a mix of annoyance and understanding. The Hillcrest curse has an insidious way of bringing out the worst in the best of men, and I know that, just as I had done with Olivia and Ethan with Isabella, Landon will do whatever it takes to make things right.

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